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Best Not to Ignore

A critical enquiry into a higher education cine-theatrical
pedagogy

By

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Inclusion of Published Work

In the development of this thesis, work has been disseminated and sections of analysis reproduced within several journal articles and reviews. They are listed chronologically as follows:

- CROSSLEY, M. (2009) 'A certain danger': Contemporary performer engagement with the texts and methodology of Robert Lepage. *Canadian Journal of Practice-based Research in Theatre*, (1), 1.
- CROSSLEY, M. (2010) The River Flows On: Student performer engagement with the texts and methodology of Robert Lepage. *Education and Theatre Journal, Hellenic Theatre / Drama and Education Network*, Issue No 11 pp. 23 – 34.
- CROSSLEY, M. (2012) From LeCompte to Lepage: Student performer engagement with intermedial practice. *International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media*, 8, (2), pp. 171-188.
- CROSSLEY, M. (2013) In search of an Intermedial Pedagogy within Higher Education Drama and Performing Arts Degrees in Theatre Pedagogy. In: BALDWIN, J. et al. (eds.) *IUTA Publication of Papers from the 8th World Congress, DMU Leicester 2010 AITU – IUTA*, pp. 36 – 43.
- CROSSLEY, M. (2013) Book Review VANDERBEEKEN, R. et al. (eds.) *Theatre Topics: Bastard or Playmate: Adapting Theatre, Mutating Media and Contemporary Performing Arts*. (2012) *Studies in Theatre & Performance*, 33 (2), pp. 245-246.

Abstract

Technology will move in and speak through you, like it or not. Best not to ignore.

(*Certain Fragments*, Tim Etchells 1999: 95)

This thesis is a reflection and an argument. It is a reflection on the history of the intermedial embrace between film and theatre and the implications this has for contemporary educators and learners in higher education performing arts programmes. It is also a critical argument for how and why cine-theatrical intermediality is distinct in creating particularly poignant and insightful modes of experience and learning that reveal new ways of perceiving our being-in-the-world. A disposition of vulnerability is central to the thinking and ethos within the study as I propose that the phenomenological, embodied experience of cine-theatrical practice potentially exposes educators and learners to their own fragility as the significance of our human body in contiguous time and space is brought into question.

The work resides within two main sections: **Mapping Constellations** and **Case Studies: Cine-Theatrical Pedagogy in Practice**. In **Mapping Constellations** I pursue the parallel aims of mapping the key territories of intermediality, intermodality and hypermediality in practitioner and pedagogical terms whilst also reappraising intermediality and principally cine-theatricality's significance as central modes of 20th and 21st century practice through which all of theatre and theatre pedagogy may be informed. In this context, **Case Studies: Cine-Theatrical Pedagogy in Practice** follows on to consider how professional methodologies of intermedial practice may act as pedagogical lenses to inform teaching and learning. Each is framed philosophically as representing a particular and revelatory pedagogy that discloses and challenges our sense of self in time and space, self as 'other' and self as a mediated, social being.

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Introduction – Part 1

The vulnerable author

Alex, Rich, Elvis and I: *On the road to intermediality*

To my recollection Alex was not, by her own admission, a student who embraced technology and all its foibles. As we both looked at the temperamental video players and projectors sat on the scaffolding there was silent agreement between us that we were at a loss as to how to remedy the problem with five minutes to go before the show started. It is in those moments that you question the naivety that allowed you some six months prior to announce that your next major performance would be an outdoor extravaganza entitled, with minimal humility, *Elvis with Fireworks*.

As it turned out, with great fortune, May 2001 was a blazingly hot month and all was set fair for the show. To my knowledge Daventry Tertiary College had not experienced such a reckless and technologically ambitious piece of work since its instigation in the early 1970's, so anticipation was high. In principle the plan was simple: write a musical based on the songs of Elvis with the central premise that the principle female character, Marie, wasn't able to find love as she could not get over the death of her idol some thirty years previously. Elvis therefore resided in 'heaven' some two storeys up on the Maths block, hence the need for full climbing harnesses, partly so that his angels (Year 10 students from a local school) could abseil to 'earth'

in the quadrangle and also so that Elvis would not fall to his death whilst gyrating. Added to this we suspended two large screens made out of tarpaulin at either end of the quad and created footage for both screens that was designed to work in sync with each other and with the live action that operated 'in the round' between them. By way of illustration I will describe the final scenes as they were envisaged.

Marie is waiting forlornly at the church in her wedding dress, having finally been persuaded to marry Barry who is not the man of her dreams. Suddenly a car, driven



Fig. 1

by Les Vegas (her father unbeknownst to both of them), who is inattentively lighting a cigar, appears on the screen to the left. It is careering towards Marie. The bride to be and the bridesmaids live on stage 're-act' to

the perilous filmic image but nothing can stop her being run over and the car shudders to a stop, now across on the second screen to the right, as if it has traversed the whole space. A split second later we see the bridesmaids and Barry stare back into the camera lens (see Fig. 1) as if peering down at the body on the road surface. Alas, Marie cannot be saved and in the final moment of the performance an 'angelic' biker rides on in his full leathers (as played by one of the science teachers who happened to have a Harley Davison look-alike motorcycle), scoops her up on to the pillion and they ride off together to heaven where she can at last be with Elvis. As the bike leaves the quad a screen shows them flying through the nights sky, disappearing into infinity as she waves goodbye.

As Alex and I looked at the various recorders and projectors that were supposedly about to propel such wonders on to the screens it seemed a far away prospect as none of them appeared to be inclined to respond to the limited functions of *play*, *stop*, *rewind* and so on. There was a growing feeling that I was being engulfed by my own hubris. The thought that I and a group of A Level Drama and BTEC Performing Arts students with limited technical acumen and an even smaller amount of money could carry off such a feat as this in a rather bleak quadrangle in Northamptonshire seemed ludicrous. However, the instinct to create spectacle and illusion always seemed to win out against common sense, overruled by the thrill of engulfing an audience in diverse media with figures writ large on screen transcending the live stage and defying boundaries of time and space. These desires, Méliès or Barnumesque as they may have been, reach to the heart of this enquiry and why I am infatuated with the teaching of mixed media practice. It is worth noting that at this stage, and in the context of work from as long ago as 2001, that I am reticent to use the term intermediality as I had no awareness of this theoretical field at that time or for several years to come.

I have always been a slightly reluctant drama teacher in all my roles at secondary, tertiary and now within higher education; reluctant in the sense that the written text and I did not always get along. To quote Harold Pinter: 'I have mixed feelings about words myself' (1998: 23), and the canonical respect that I felt I was to afford to certain plays and certain writers never sat comfortably with my own practice or the learning opportunities I was trying to create. I had always been drawn to the visual and the filmic as inspiration for live work and the integration of filmic and televisual

media in student work has been a constant theme if I look back at twenty years of teaching. Not only have I physically placed screens into the live space but also I have ‘borrowed’ the structures of screen-based media into the work in terms of acting style and spatial relationships. What I will later refer to as examples of remediation (Bolter and Grusin 1999) and intermedial referencing (Rajewsky 2005, 2010) were inherent in my practice from the early 1990’s but at the time I was not conscious of their implications or the theoretical framework that they conceivably sat within. From my perspective I had students who were energised and informed by popular, televisual culture (as was I) and the appropriation of *modus operandi* from this culture seemed relevant within the drama space. To cite Robert Lepage, I was interested in ‘theatricality’ (Dundjerović 2007: 2) rather than any pure notion of theatre and wanted to collage work from a variety of sources rather than be restricted to interpreting a single authorial text from page to stage. By no means do I wish to give the impression that this was the entire scope of my teaching curricula at this stage in my career, but where I had license to divert from examination specifications I tended to gravitate towards mixed media work. Not only did I feel more creative in this environment but also the students seemed to have more agency over the outcomes and I enjoyed the uncertainty and equality that developed when drawing on a shared culture. The possibilities of the ‘liminal space’ (Broadhurst 1999), where live and the virtual met, always had a constant pull upon me.

A few months after *Elvis with Fireworks*, and in sharp contrast to the Heath Robinson exertions in Daventry, I was invited to a performance of an experimental piece

entitled *Blue bloodshot flowers* at 291 Gallery in the East End of London. I knew nothing about the piece but the invitation came from Rich Bowden, then working at Surrey University, who I had met for the first time whilst on honeymoon in Egypt. Rich was collaborating with Sue Broadhurst at Brunel University on performance work that integrated an interactive, animated projection of a



Fig. 2

face (known as Jeremiah) with a solo performer, Elodie Berland. (see Fig. 2) The piece was comprised of a monologue spoken by Elodie whilst she moved to certain spaces on the stage. Jeremiah was able to sense these movements and respond with a variety of emotions represented on its face. These were not predictable and often provided an amusing or incongruous connection to the gravity of the text. I recall being intrigued by the work but also slightly removed from it as the technology seemed to demand our appreciation and the performer had to navigate her physical performance to correspond with the spatial demands of Jeremiah. The two did not necessarily connect or create a relationship and you were often left looking at one entity or the other.

However, being the eager nascent intermedialist that I was I asked Rich if Jeremiah could be co-opted into a piece with my own tertiary students at Daventry. Despite having his doubts Rich agreed and the following spring we created *Albion*, a piece exploring British identity that was performed at the college and at Northampton University in collaboration with Jonathan Pitches. The piece worked on a grid system

with performers using pre-selected spaces on stage that would allow Jeremiah (perhaps perceived as an 'everyman' character or John Bull) to look down on the stereotyped scenarios and offer 'emotional' comment. Undoubtedly this was a technological leap forward from *Elvis* and my cantankerous video players although in many ways less satisfying as an experience as the infrastructure and performative constraints required to make it work, slightly isolated the students from the making process.

I offer these experiences as they capture me in a period when I was stumbling towards an awareness of intermediality, driven on by a fascination with live and virtual interfaces but with limited knowledge of how to explicate this process to myself and students beyond the experiential learning that came through rehearsal and performance. We all enjoyed the devising process and the performances could, if necessary, be quantified by some set of criteria or another. However, I was always conscious that something more than live performance was occurring in such pieces. Part of the reason we enjoyed creating them was the initial dislocation of time and space (in the filming of sequences or mapping out of signals to offer Jeremiah) that were then seemingly reconnected in the final live event. Actors and audience were constantly negotiating such dislocations and blurrings of temporal and spatial barriers in performance but I had no theoretical or educational model to fall back on at the time. The theoretical frame is arguably now there but the educational one is still under construction.

On reflection it was a haphazard journey towards intermediality that I went on (and am still navigating), built upon stubborn naivety, a televisual upbringing, chance

Egyptian encounters but also, I hope, a measure of genuine educational intent. The events I have briefly illuminated also highlight some of the joys and tensions of intermedial practice as we may revel in the interplay between media but likewise struggle to make that relationship equitable and purposeful particularly in an educational setting.

A year after *Blue bloodshot flowers* Sue Broadhurst reflected on what research questions the piece raised for her:

What are the effects of new technologies on the analysis of the performing body? What are the theoretical implications of virtual performance for the body and space? What are the implications of, and how do we theorise the resultant destabilisation of identity and origin? What is the potential for participation and interactivity, inter-performer and spectatorship within this new art practice? (2002: 162)

These questions resonate with the early writings of the avant-garde mixed media practitioners of the 1960's (Higgins, Blossom et al.) and are an introduction to the debates that developed over the nature and implications of intermediality in the first decade or so of the 21st century. Significantly there is awareness in her questions that the corporeal presence is altered in intermedial space and that the role of the performer and spectator fundamentally shift. Looking back on these now they encapsulate some of the central questions for an intermedial pedagogical inquiry and the potentiality and risks that they allude to are infused in the analyses of *imitating the dog*, Robert Lepage and *Lightwork* in the chapters to follow.

In case you were wondering by the way, Alex and I fixed the video players and projectors with a subtle combination of luck and ferocity and most films worked most of the time. The piece ended every night with fireworks launched from the roof of the English Studies and Hairdressing block as the sun set over Daventry.

Introduction – Part 2

All our vulnerable selves

When we were children, we used to think that when we were grown-up we would no longer be vulnerable. But to grow up is to accept vulnerability... To be alive is to be vulnerable.

(Madeleine L'Engle 1995: 44)

Vulnerability may seem a strange and counter-intuitive term to be foregrounding when robustly proposing a new pedagogical perspective, yet the theme that I will return to time and again is that vulnerability is a principal mode of engagement with the world through which we may experience our significance as contemporaneous beings, forever in transition. Intermediality is both a metaphor and a means for expressing this state of being.

Many theorists have reflected upon the vulnerable state of modern society in the post-modern era and concurrent to this debate is the interrelated instability of contemporary art. As will be explored later in the **Prologue** to **Mapping Constellations** the irresistible march of technology through the 20th and 21st centuries has destabilised notions of permanence and duration as society becomes enamoured by instantaneity and reproducibility. What is real or live is now blurring with what is virtual and extra-temporal. It is worth reminding ourselves that we, including students, live in this fluctuating world.

Nicolas Bourriaud, in his essay *Precarious Constructions* (2009) offers us the paradigm of precariousness as a fundamental state of contemporary existence and as an ontological cornerstone of artistic creativity that serves as an apposite perspective to frame this study. Bourriaud proposes that modern life is now predicated on disposability and liquidity and is driven by the 'horror of expiry'. (2009: 23) This unstable and transitory condition, he suggests, is mirrored in our own sense of identity. He cites Michel Maffesoli who in *Du Nomadisme* (1997) wrote that we now have: 'A fragile identity, an identity which is no longer, as was the case during modernity, the only solid foundation of individual and social life.' (109) In response to this state of being Bourriaud writes:

My hypothesis is that art not only seems to have found the means to resist this new, instable environment, but has also derived specific means from it. A precarious regime of aesthetics is developing, based on speed, intermittence, blurring and fragility. Today, we need to reconsider culture (and ethics) on the basis of a positive idea of the transitory, instead of holding on to the opposition between the ephemeral and the durable and seeing the latter as the touchstone of true art and the former as a sign of barbarism. (2009: 23)

Art, in this mode, occupies a liminal space, forever becoming, forever in transition. This is not merely in its form, which may be in short but intense durations or in its temporary use of non-theatrical spaces, but in the fundamental use of multiple

‘unstable’ media that are never easily grounded or made permanent in their means of representation or meanings.

Thus, contemporary art assumes this double status of crossing borders and precariousness, by the undifferentiated use of different ‘mediums’ – something that Rosalind Krauss, from a very critical perspective, calls the ‘postmedia condition’ of contemporary art. (32)

Bourriaud believes that through the phenomenalizing of art in this fragile and uncertain mode we may challenge the seeming permanence of political and cultural structures. He states that the ‘essential content’ of contemporary art is ‘maintaining the world in a precarious state or, in other words, permanently affirming the transitory, circumstantial nature of the institutions that partition the state and of the rules that govern individual or collective behaviour.’ (36) To be vulnerable is to recognize the potential for change. Pedagogy can have no greater ally than that.

Scope and structure of the study

The intention of this study is to critically reflect upon the opportunities and challenges that cine-theatrical intermedial practice offers to contemporary university level pedagogy. As will be illustrated, the field of intermediality is extensive and multi-dimensional, covering diverse practices across the performing arts but also linguistics, literature and many other semiotic systems. Even within the bounds of performance the term intermediality, by most definitions, is able to embrace a plethora of inter-relationships from somatic fusions such as dance theatre to technologically driven hybrids such as altered reality and posthuman cyborgism. To offer some delimitation to my own work I intend to place a particular focus on the intermedial ramifications of live and filmic¹ interaction within the dramatic, theatrical domain. Throughout the study I refer to this media combination as *cine-theatrical*, a term that is intended to capture the appearance or evocation of cinema within the live, theatrical domain and should be seen as distinct from terms such as 'cinematographic theatre' as proposed by André Bazin to express theatrical evocation in cinema. The rationale for attending to this specific field rests upon the ubiquity of the practice, despite the fact that other technological manifestations of intermediality such as virtual and altered reality have appeared in recent years to vie for credibility and popularity within the field of performance. Not only is film/theatre intermedial performance still proliferating but it also has, as will be analysed in **Mapping Constellations**, a rich seam of historical practice upon which educators and

¹ I employ the term 'filmic' as a default description that also encompasses tele-visual practices. Where necessary I will identify any specific tele-visual modes that may be significantly distinct from the filmic and hence worthy of note in the analyses.

students may draw. This particular hybrid has been described with various terms over recent decades including ‘filmstage’ by Roberts Blossom in 1966 and ‘cinematic theatre’ (2007) as proposed by Sasha Dundjerović in relation to the work of Robert Lepage. Both these terms are appropriate in specific contexts (and will be referred to in the study) but arguably evoke the filmic domains of a soundstage or movie theatre as much as they denote an intermedial hybrid.

Whilst there has been some recent reflection on intermedial teaching from an inter-textual perspective (Semali and Watts Pailliotet 1999 for example) the specific pedagogical issues arising from embodied, performance practice have had limited attention. Live and filmic intermediality has played a significant role in historical and contemporary terms, from Georges Méliès through to *The Wooster Group*, yet its specific implications for university pedagogy (or andragogy)² have not been reflected upon with any sustained rigour. At the heart of such practice are certain complex dialogues unique to intermediality, as it requires both an embodied experiential participation in conjunction with a meta-awareness of theatrical and cultural discourses. My contention is that intermediality necessitates what I will refer to as a *within and without* engagement that can accommodate, often simultaneously, the visceral experience of embodiment within the performance as well as an understanding, articulation and interaction with the multi-dimensional media texts and forms that are present alongside each other in the theatre space. Pedagogically this is substantive as the engagement of the student as deviser or performer is now

² The term *andragogy* refers specifically to adult learning and was developed in the UK by several practitioners including Edouard Lindeman and Malcolm Knowles. The term is potentially applicable in this thesis but I prefer pedagogy as it has wider recognition as a term and covers the university age group that I refer to.

enmeshed within multiple media discourses. The centrality of the corporeal actor embodying a unified role is now in question as any characterisation or representation may now be reliant on composites created across live and screen based media, such as a 'digital double' (Dixon 2007a) or 'mediaphoric body' (Pluta 2010)³. My proposition is that teaching and learning within this paradigm is distinct from other dramatic practices and this study's intention is to identify and evaluate key intermedial phenomena from a pedagogical perspective.

Underpinning the analyses are the recurrent philosophical themes of **constructivism**, **phenomenology** and, particularly in the first case study, **Deleuzian conceptions of time and movement**. Constructivism is the principle educational model that I will apply to the case study practices, as its central tenet of constructing knowledge through subjective experience is coterminous with intermedial practice that is anti-canonical and anti-hierarchical. The significance that constructivism places upon experience creates profitable synergies with phenomenology as the philosophical study of experience and hence the works of Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty are central sources of inspiration to explicate the intermedial experience from *within*. Deleuze is drawn upon for his radical writings on cinema that re-frame the medium as a fundamental way of seeing the world and seeing ourselves as temporal beings within the world.

These philosophical themes are interlinked with the pedagogical themes of **vulnerability**, **transition** and **agency**.⁴ Transition may be considered a constant mode

³ See **Butterflies** chapter for analysis of Dixon's digital 'doubles' and Pluta's 'mediaphoric body'.

⁴ **Agency** will be specifically considered in phenomenological terms in **Intermedial Pedagogy: a work in progress**.

of our contemporary vulnerable existence, witnessed not only in global translocations but also in media interactions and the permanent flow of information that is a central discourse to our lives. The fragility and impermanence this potentially creates for us raises pertinent pedagogical questions as to how we construct a complex and coherent sense of *agency* over our lives. These concepts inform the specific case study chapters that are designed to critique and build certain pedagogies upon three key intermedial phenomena: ***trans/re-mediation***, ***intermedial embodiment*** and the ***hypermedium*** respectively.

The **Methodology** chapter establishes the principle hypotheses and research questions guiding the study. It outlines the rationale for the two distinct sections within the thesis and the framework of historical and case study research that informs the analysis.⁵

Mapping Constellations represents a series of six chapters that have the parallel aims of mapping the key territories of intermediality, intermodality and hypermediality in practitioner and pedagogical terms whilst also reappraising intermediality and principally cine-theatricality's significance as central modes of 20th and 21st century practice through which all of theatre and theatre pedagogy may be informed. Lars Elleström's influential model of intermodal relations (2010) is introduced and henceforth utilized within all analyses as a means of explicating what constitutes a 'medium' and how they interact intermedially. Throughout the review particular attention is also placed on the mutability of theatre and the potential impact this has upon the embodied experience within a technological mise en scène.

⁵ The **Methodology** precedes the review of current literature (as presented in **Mapping Constellations**) in order to contextualise and justify the central two-part structure.

Case Studies: Cine-Theatrical Pedagogy in Practice comprises three analytical case study chapters as outlined below. Each draws upon specific practitioner examples and considers how educational professionals within the university sector may construct an enabling correlation between contemporary practice and emergent intermedial theory. Focus is placed upon *constructivist* and *phenomenological* models of learning that privilege practice-based enquiry informed by the lived experience of the learner. Allied to this, attention is given to the negotiation of the *within and without* paradigm and how students may find *agency* in devising, performance and spectatorship via both the subjective, sensorial *and* objective, critical modes of perception.

Can Dogs Speak French?: Pedagogy of fragility considers our sense of self in time and space. It centres on the concepts of *remediation* and *trans-mediation* in the creation of intermedial work and how pedagogy may respond to the fluid intermedial and intertextual dialogues present in contemporary practice. The notion of *enculturated intermediality* is highlighted as a means of describing and analysing the students culturally learnt embodiment of mediated practices and how this may facilitate their learning. The work of the Lancaster based company *imitating the dog* offers a central case study to interrogate the challenges of hybridising media forms and texts within one theatrical spectacle.

Butterflies: Pedagogy of absence considers *intermedial embodiment* in terms of our own relationship to self and the concept of self as inter-subjective 'other'. Emphasis is shifted to the experiential processes of intermedial performance and how students may respond to a performance environment in which role embodiment and

narrative are constructed across multiple media platforms. Drew Leder's theories of 'absence' (1999) and Steve Dixon's notion of the 'digital double' (2007) are particularly referenced to consider how the student actor negotiates notions of presence and absence, self and 'other' and the duality of being both *within and without* the experience of performing. An undergraduate performance of Robert Lepage's *Seven Streams of the River Ota*, created with my own students at De Montfort University (DMU) in 2008 – 9 provides the central case study.

Bells and Meteorites: Pedagogy of realisation considers the self as a mediated, social being. The investigation focuses on the pedagogical potential of the *hypermedial* environment and the simultaneous experiences of immediacy juxtaposed with a meta-awareness of media processes. The central case study is the production of *The Good Actor* by *Lightwork*, through which analysis and evaluation is presented on postdramatic performances in which the actors and spectators are both immersed in the live, performative experience whilst concurrently and overtly being remediated into other digital forms. Recent research on surveillance theatre is utilized to consider the role media may play in reconfiguring spectatorial relationships and our sense of self and our agency as 'actors' within the world.

In the concluding chapter entitled **Conclusions: My Experience Tells Me**, I revisit the hypotheses proposed in the **Methodology**, and offer some final reflections on the implications of the study for intermediality within higher education performing arts programmes and for the educators and learners engaged in such practice.

Methodology

Introduction

This thesis and the research herein is an act of conviction on my part to establish new knowledge for a particular context and a particular audience. Specifically in this case I am interested in researching and speculating on intermediality's lineage and potential in higher education performing arts programmes. It is an act of conviction because I am a lecturer who, as has been reflected upon in the **Introduction – Part 1**, is at home when immersed in a digitally infused theatrical environment with my students. It is central to the courses on which I teach and has been a cornerstone of my teaching methodology for nearly twenty years. I believe this environment creates something distinct for educators and learners that is not merely a sub-stratum of theatre practice. This has driven the structure of the research methodology and creates potential vulnerabilities of which I must be aware.

Research design: structuring the thesis

The thesis is constructed in two major sections. The first section is entitled **Mapping Constellations** and the latter section is entitled **Case Studies: Cine-Theatrical Pedagogy in Practice**; both sections containing several interconnected chapters. The design of the research into these two sections is founded upon the objective of

balancing a wider historical and contextual perspective alongside grounded research rooted in personal pedagogical and practitioner experience. As John O'Toole notes in *Doing Drama Research* (2006), engaging in this field, particularly in applied settings, often necessitates hybridisation. There are not clear delineations between pure and applied research as education is situated in a specific set of circumstances. He writes:

But what is 'pure research' in the setting of applied theatre, including drama education? It's an oxymoron. However, the question of 'usefulness' is relevant. It is helpful to make a distinction between short-term pragmatic or utilitarian uses for the research, and long-term social, philosophical or epistemological relevance. (2006: 13-14)

Predominantly I perceive the work as a philosophical study built upon questioning the ontology of the relevant media and how their combinations in contemporary performance open up new ways of students perceiving themselves within the world. Specific teaching methodology is considered at times but it must be made clear at this stage that this is not a 'toolkit' for teaching intermedial performance at university level. However, this conscious omission is not to be confused with an absence of real world 'usefulness'. For me this study establishes and justifies the foundations for a new methodology or perhaps, for others, it may be seen as a clearer and more robust theorisation for the work that is already undertaken across the sector.

Mapping Constellations

The first half of the thesis is predominantly given over to a set of chapters under the banner of **Mapping Constellations** that are designed to review the 'practice and pedagogy of media and intermedia'. To this end it is designed as a body of historical research as identified by Cohen et al. (2005) as it involves 'the identification and limitation of a problem or area of study' (2005: 158), namely the relationships between film and theatre in the 20th and 21st centuries and the pedagogical responses to this phenomenon to date. Citing Hill and Kerber (1967) they outline the values of historical research which include its potential to shed light on contemporary problems, to evaluate the effects of interactions and that 'it allows for the revaluation of data in relation to selected hypotheses, theories and generalisations that are presently held about the past.' (2005: 158)

Challenging existing paradigms necessitated the construction of my own principle hypotheses that underpinned the analysis and evaluation in these chapters. These may be summarised as:

- Intermediality is an ever-present condition of performance.
- Cine-theatrical intermediality has a recognisable lineage throughout the 20th and 21st centuries.
- The combination of the distinct modalities of film, television and theatre creates particular relationships between bodies in time and space, which are not replicated when these media are phenomenised independently of each other.

- Intermedial pedagogy has an emergent presence within literature and practice but a cohesive body of knowledge in this field has not been developed to date.

The overall structure of the chapters in this section is informed and guided by Jürgen Muller's iteration of intermedial categories (2002) and as reiterated by Irina Rajewsky (2005). Muller distinguishes between *synchronic and diachronic* investigation⁶ when he states that intermedial studies may include '(both a) ... *synchronic* research perspective, which develops a typology of specific forms of intermediality, and the *diachronic* perspective of an intermedial history of media.' (Muller 2002: 7) **The stars and constellations of media** and **Theatre as hypermedium** chapters in particular offer a detailed synchronic analysis and evaluation of intermedial and hypermedial terminology and their pertinence to the pedagogical debate whilst the remaining chapters (excluding **Intermedial Pedagogy: a work in progress**) consider the historical and contemporary trajectories of theatre, film, television and cine-theatrical intermediality. The final chapter, **Intermedial Pedagogy: a work in progress**, is the most extensive chapter in this section and focuses initially on the pedagogical research to date in the fields of intermediality and constructivist methodologies in drama at higher education level. In the latter half of this chapter the philosophical strands of the enquiry come to the fore once more as I propose three interrelated paradigms: *constructivism, phenomenology and enculturated intermediality* that may inform a new pedagogy.⁷

⁶ Muller and Rajewsky's explanations of synchronic and diachronic study are outlined further in **The stars and constellations of media**.

⁷ See **Structure and Scope of Study** for a rationale for the inclusion of these theoretical frames.

The chapters draw upon a significant breadth of secondary sources from theatre, film/television, intermedial and pedagogical history and contemporary theory. I commence the study historically at the beginning of the 'electric age' as Marshall McLuhan referred to this early period of the 20th century through to the current digital era in order to offer some clear delimitation to the study. Where relevant these secondary sources are correlated with primary research from my own interviews and case study observations.

Case Studies: Cine -Theatrical Pedagogy in Practice

The three case studies constitute the majority of the latter part of the thesis and are designed to investigate the real-world nature of cine-theatrical intermedial process and performance environments. Each is conceived as an *exploratory case study* (Yin 2009: 9) as the intention is to consider: What may be learnt pedagogically from practical instances of cine-theatricality? In this regard the cases can be differentiated from *descriptive* or *explanatory projects*. (ibid)

As can be seen from the secondary titles of each case study chapter – **Pedagogy of Fragility, Pedagogy of Absence, Pedagogy of Realisation** – there are theoretical propositions proffered as to the teaching and learning potential to be garnered from the practices but these framing devices were developed through post observation analysis and do not represent *a priori* theories to be tested out within the observation periods. In this regard the case studies are not designed or intended to be *explanatory cases*. Due to the dense nature of the performance work

documented there is a degree of narrativity in each chapter to describe and contextualize the work. In light of the constructivist paradigms that are being applied to each case this approach is pertinent, as analysis of the nature of the experience and how participant realities are constructed within it requires a rich contextual framing. As Robert E. Stake notes: 'Constructivism helps a case study researcher justify lots of narrative description in the final report.' (1995: 102) However, the overall emphasis is on exploration and proposition utilising selective exemplar as opposed to a predominance of a fulsome, descriptive narrative as necessary in a *descriptive case study*.

Case Study Research Questions

The questions developed for the cases studies were a central part of each *protocol*⁸ (Yin 2003, 2009) and were built around Robert E. Stake's conception of *issue*, *information* and *evaluation* questions. (1995: 18-19) The principal focus was on *issue* questions to problematise the case in question and to 'force attention to complexity and contextuality.' (18) For the three case studies I had a set of overarching *issue* questions amplified by *information* questions (to enhance description and underpin analysis) and *evaluation* questions (leading towards propositions). These were correlative with the hypotheses from **Mapping Constellations**. Below are the hypotheses (in bold) with the relatable questions listed as follows - * *issue*, ► *information*, ✕ *evaluation*:

⁸ See Appendix 1 for an example of the *imitating the dog* protocol.

- **Intermediality is an ever-present condition of performance.**
 - * Are practitioners consciously using intermedial modes in their work or are processes built upon more ad hoc combinations of media?
 - What media 'languages' are being drawn upon?
 - What intermedial language, if any, is being used?
 - ⊗ How effective or pertinent may Elleström's model of modalities and intermedia be in practice?
- **Cine-theatrical intermediality has a recognisable lineage throughout the 20th and 21st centuries.**
 - * Do practitioners actually access a body of intermedial tradition in their practice?
 - What intermedial traditions or known practices, if any, are being used?
 - ⊗ How resonant for contemporary practitioners is the lineage of intermedial practice?
- **The combination of the distinct modalities of film, television and theatre creates particular relationships between bodies in time and space, which are not replicated when these media are phenomenised independently of each other.**
 - * Do cine-theatrical combinations of media actually create effects/affects that are demonstrably distinct?

- ▶ Which modalities are employed/foregrounded most often in practice?
- ⊗ Which modalities have the greatest impact in creating intermedial work?
- **Intermedial pedagogy has an emergent presence within literature and practice but a cohesive body of knowledge in this field has not been developed to date.**
 - * Is current pedagogical theory relevant to the practice being observed and created in the case studies?
 - ⊗ What pedagogy or methodology is applied/applicable in each case?
 - ⊗ How might pedagogy be reconsidered in light of the observations and interviews?

In addition to these questions, the central pedagogical issues of ***vulnerability***, ***transition*** and ***agency*** came to the fore and generated their own supplementary but significant set of questions.

- * Are actors/students within the case studies process and performance environments able to manage their agency?
- ▶ What decisions are taken by whom and when about the creation of the work and the personas/characters within the piece?

- ⊗ How may agency need to be reconsidered in intermedial practice and pedagogy?
- ⊗ How may transitory and vulnerable modes of experience be utilised in teaching and learning?

The three studies have been selected and structured to interrelate and for correlations and contrasts to be acknowledged. 'Units of analysis' (Yin 2009: 31) generic to all cases were identified before commencing the observations and interviews so as to place some initial parameters on the data collection.⁹ The units focused on: *instances of the intermedial trends (historical and contemporary), overt use of single or intermedial frames of reference, language used (technical/filmic/televisual/theatrical etc)* and of particular interest was *participant experience (actors/students/directors) – specifically their comprehension of their contribution to the project and what control they had over decision making*. These were not prescriptive however and over time I also added additional categories such as *spatialisation of rehearsal environment (relationships between technology, stage and actors)*.

The overriding premise behind the case studies was to ground the theory within **Mapping Constellations** and test its relevance and possibilities in practice. In this regard the intention was to 'expand and generalise theories' as opposed to accumulating and critiquing statistical frequencies. (Yin 2009: 15)

⁹ Robert K. Yin refers to a case study with multiple 'units of analysis' as 'embedded'. (2009: 50)

Rationale for selection and structure of case studies

The first case study to be selected (although it appears second in the order for thematic reasons) was my own project *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* as created at De Montfort University between Autumn 2008 and Spring 2009. Initially it was conceived of as a 'pilot case' as a means of refining my data collection strategies (Yin 2009: 92), but as the project developed in scope during my pre-term planning I decided to construct it more formally as a *reflective practitioner case study*. (O'Toole 2006: 56-57)¹⁰ This decision can be traced back to the underlying impetus for this thesis, as I was aware of challenges and tensions in my own practice so perceived the benefit of analysing my own experience in depth. As O'Toole notes, this type of case study allows me to 'observe myself to refine my own perceptions of what is happening in my classroom, how I am dealing with it, and indeed what are the problems that I perceive which may need addressing...' (57) Philip Taylor likewise proposes that '... there is an attractiveness in reflective practitioner design because it honours the intuitive and emergent processes that inform artistic meaning-making.' (2005: 29) As can be seen from the construction of the project it differs fundamentally from the other two case studies, as I was a central participant as the module tutor. This created its own set of particular challenges that will be addressed in the chapter itself.

To find balance in the case study design I followed this *reflective practitioner* study with two professional cases in which I embedded myself as a non-participant

¹⁰ Institutional (DMU) and participant (student) permissions were sought and granted for the research project in October 2008.

observer¹¹ and interviewer. A central interest was in discovering if the challenges of the university environment were replicated in any way within the professional environment. Although they were considered *exploratory*, following ‘intuitive paths’ of enquiry as Yin describes (2003: 6), it was important to select professional work that reflected key contemporary trends in cine-theatrical intermedial practice. So as to broaden the type of data I could analyse and enhance the validity of any findings, I selected two projects representing contrasting approaches. The work of *imitating the dog* fused filmic and live media into what could be described as a unified aesthetic or ‘theatricalized film’ as I later refer to it. This style epitomised a significant proportion of practice seen within the UK from 1927 *Cabaret* to *Forkbeard Fantasy*. *Lightwork* on the other hand, particularly in *The Good Actor*, created work that foregrounded a juxtaposition of media in which the technology was overt, as may be seen in the work of *The Wooster Group* or recent productions by the director Katie Mitchell.

To find correlations and contrasts, the same set of research questions and units of analysis (see above) were applied to all three cases. The major difference between the first DMU case and the other two was the addition of ‘focused’ interviews (see next section) with actors and directors for *imitating the dog* and *Lightwork*, whereas for *Seven Streams* I placed greater reliance on my own observational notes and student journals.¹² To minimise the impact on the student group I decided not to

¹¹ In the *Lightwork* project (see **Bells and Meteorites**) my overall mode was non-participant observer, but as will be noted in the analysis, I experienced the immersive quality of the installation on several occasions (when requested) and as such adopted what I refer to as the audience-as-actor mode.

¹² DMU student journal and rehearsal quotes are anonymized as agreed with students. All other quotes are directly attributed as individual permission was sought from participants in the *imitating the dog* and *Lightwork* projects.

undertake interviews during or after the process as the project was assessable by myself and another tutor and the students may have misconstrued any discursive interaction. All contributions from this specific project are anonymized.

Interviews

The interviews for the study consisted of two types: 'in depth' and 'focused' (Yin 2009: 107) and the interviewees fell in to two categories which I will refer to as: *theoretical / pedagogical reflector* and *participant* (actor/director/student). At times, although this was not designed in advance, certain participants became what Stake (1995) and Yin (2009) refer to as 'informants', offering counter perspectives to those of the perceived authority figure/s in the case studies. Some interviewees crossed the boundary between reflector and participant, in particular Andy Lavender, who I interviewed on general topics of intermediality and pedagogy but also (in the same in-depth interview and during *Lightwork* rehearsals) about the specifics of *The Good Actor*.

The in depth interviews were undertaken outside of the case study environments and were carried out in person or via *Skype*. The twofold intention for these interviews was to inform the theorisation in **Mapping Constellations** and the pedagogical analysis in **Case Studies: Cine-Theatrical Pedagogy in Practice**. Therefore each person was selected for the prominent educational role they have played in recent theorising on the subject of intermediality and specifically, in the case of Andy Lavender and Greg Gieseckam, their reflections on the relationship

between film and live performance.¹³ The following interviews distinctly fall under the in-depth category:

- **Freda Chapple:** joint editor of *Intermediality in Theatre and Performance* (2006) Interviewed Oct. 2010 in person at her home.
- **Andy Lavender:** joint editor of *Mapping Intermediality in Performance* (2010) Interviewed Nov. 2010 in person at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.
- **Greg Gieseckam:** author of *Staging the Screen* (2007) Interviewed Dec. 2010 via Skype.

Alongside these extended interviews I also sought focused responses about the pedagogical potential and practicalities of teaching intermedial work from the following:

- **Nick Hunt and Rachel Nicholson** from Rose Bruford College: respectively (as of 2009) Head of School: Design, Management and Technical Arts and Module Year Co-ordinator: Lighting. Interviewed Sept 2009 in person at the TAPRA¹⁴ conference.
- **Mary Oliver:** Reader in Digital Performance and Head of the Performance Research Centre at the University of Salford and author on intermedial pedagogy. Interviewed Sept. 2010 in person at the TAPRA conference.

¹³ See *Appendix 2* for a sample of interview questions.

¹⁴ TAPRA – Theatre and Performance Research Association – annual conference held every September in the UK.

- **Russell Fewster:** Program Director for the Media Arts Program (MBMA), Lecturer in Drama and Film, University of South Australia and author on intermedial pedagogy. Interviewed in March 2012 via email.
- **Lars Elleström:** editor of *Media Borders, Multimodality and Intermediality* (2010) Interviewed in April 2013 via email.

The actor interviews undertaken during rehearsal periods for *imitating the dog* and *Lightwork* were focused (lasting thirty minutes on average) and concentrated on the unit of analysis entitled: *participant experience (actors/students/directors) – specifically their comprehension of their contribution to the project and what control they had over decision making*. The director interviews with Andrew Quick (*imitating the dog*) and Andy Lavender (*Lightwork*) were more reflective and addressed issues of thematic structure and the function and affect of intermedial practice. It is worth noting that the paradigms of *constructivism*, *phenomenology* and *enculturated intermediality* were brought it to the analytical phase post observation as a means of articulating and evaluating the data so were not used to frame the interview questions.

As can be seen when reading the chapters, certain interviewees are cited more frequently such as Andy Lavender, whilst other interviewees such as Freda Chapple provided **an** informative context for my own deliberations but less specific analysis that was applicable to be quoted in relation to the historical research or the case studies.

Addressing case study criticism

Both Stake (1995) and Yin (2003, 2009), along with numerable articles and papers (eg. Hodkinson and Hodkinson 2001) have identified the potential strengths of case study research **and** the potential weaknesses or criticisms it may be vulnerable to.

The research method was selected due to its potential to facilitate an understanding of the complex inter-relationships inherent in intermedial practice and the need on my part as a lecturer in higher education to ground the research in ‘lived reality’. Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2001) highlight these as particular strengths of the method along with its capacity to explore and discover the unusual or unexpected. However, as Yin identifies (2009) case studies have been criticised for a perceived ‘sloppy’ design structure and that they provide a limited basis for generalisation. (14 – 15)

To counter these issues I constructed the case studies alongside, and informed by, the historical research in **Mapping Constellations** in order to add depth to the context and strengthen the triangulation of data analysis. Mindful of Yin’s advocacy for multiple case study design wherever possible¹⁵ (2009: 61 – 62) I carefully selected a cross section of intermedial practices to enhance the potential for generalisation of theory although, as will be discussed in *Triangulation and Validity*, I am mindful of limiting the claims of validity.

The issue of researcher bias was at the forefront of my mind when creating the research structure, particularly as I was researching an area of practice to which I am

¹⁵ Yin does identify specific examples of unique circumstances where a single case study design is advisable. (2009: 60 – 61)

very committed *and* making use of my own practice for one of the case studies. John O'Toole offers researchers such as myself some reassurance when he states: 'Don't be afraid of your subjectivity, nor try to deny your emotional involvement with your subject.' (2006: 128) However, he also reminds us that 'reliability, credibility and triangulation' are still of paramount importance. (ibid) In response to my own concerns about bias I have attempted throughout the historical and case study analysis to forefront the counter arguments that may resist or have concerns over intermedial practice or that seek to offer an alternative perspective on the theorisation of the subject and the lived experience of the rehearsal room. For example I have included Peggy Phelan's renowned and strident advocacy for live performance, Patrice Pavis's criticisms of Lepage's work, Audrey Pointer's criticisms of *imitating the dog* as well as student journal entries and rehearsal quotes expressing worries over the *Seven Streams* creative process. Any significant and pertinent concerns expressed in actor interviews are quoted at length. My intention is to explore and propose what a cine-theatrical pedagogy may look like, including any tensions present therein.

Questionnaire

An initial questionnaire was designed to gauge the current relationship between inter-medial practice and higher education pedagogy within UK undergraduate programmes. It was circulated via the SCUDD¹⁶ email list, TAPRA conference 2009

¹⁶ SCUDD – Standing Conference of University Drama departments

and a *Palatine*¹⁷ online briefing also in 2009. Questions were structured around the topics of personal and institutional attitudes, as well as the impact of intermediality on learning outcomes and assessment. In total there were over 50 responses from academic staff in the UK. The questionnaire proved a useful tool to guide my own hypotheses and to gauge the level of interest in the topic (which was considerable) yet in the final study I decided not to devote specific analytical space to the findings as the work became more of an exploratory enquiry guided by personal observation, rather than data statistics. In *Appendix 3* I have included a summary of the data, which it **may be noted, reveals that the** majority of respondents agreeing that a specific intermedial pedagogy is required for higher education degree programmes.

Triangulation and Validity

The predominant mode of triangulation utilised within the research and particularly in the case studies was *methodological*. (Denzin 1984 as cited by Stake 1995: 114) Multiple methods were utilised for each case study including direct participant and non-participant observation, in depth and focused interviews, photographs and documentary investigation on each company which included websites, promotional materials, reviews and journal articles. The data from these methods was correlated with theoretical research compiled for **Mapping Constellations**. Due to the time constraints of each case study and my role as sole researcher there was not the opportunity to engage in any profitable level of *investigator, data or theory*

¹⁷ Palatine: the Higher Education Academy Subject Centre for Dance, Drama and Music, UK was based at Lancaster University 2000 – 2011. It has now been subsumed within the Higher Education Authority (HEA).

triangulation. (Denzin 1984 in Stake 1995: 112 – 113)¹⁸ *Member checking* (Stake 1995: 115); the process by which the ‘actors’ in each case are given the opportunity to review material written about them, was undertaken wherever possible. Drafts of work were sent to *imitating the dog* and *Andy Lavender* to review and comment upon. No changes were requested. DMU students from *Seven Streams* graduated before publication of any materials but prior consent to engage in the research was given by the full cohort and all names were subsequently anonymised.

Yin (2009: 40-45) identifies four types of validity tests that can be applied to case studies: *construct*, *internal*, *external* and *reliability*. Internal validity is of relevance to explanatory cases so is not required for measuring exploratory case studies. Below therefore is a brief summation of how this thesis addresses the three other types:

- *Construct validity*: the study uses multiple sources of evidence then connects these sources. ‘Actors’ within the study have also reviewed the analysis.
- *External validity*: the domain to which the findings of the study can be generalised has clearly been defined as cine-theatrical pedagogy at higher education level and the pertinence of the findings has been underlined, to an extent, by the range of my own publications in this field within which certain aspects of this thesis have been reflected upon.¹⁹
- *Reliability*: this is a difficult measure to adhere to with such unique experiences as rehearsal/performance processes. Yin highlights the importance of repeatability, if necessary, to arrive at similar findings yet no

¹⁸ Yin (2009: 116) also cites the same triangulation protocols as identified by Patton (2002).

¹⁹ See **Inclusion of Published Work** page for full list of publications that have disseminated this research to date.

creative process is ever the same as another. To an extent therefore the cases I use have limited reliability as Yin defines it but my contention would be that such processes and performances that I observed are, as I previously suggested, representative of trends in the intermedial field and so, whilst the particularities may change, the potentialities and challenges of such practice are identifiable across the professional and pedagogical spectrum.

The methodology outlined above was designed to be rigorous and yet flexible enough to respond to the dynamic nature of rehearsal and performance environments. The rigour is evident in the protocols, the multiple methods used and the range of counter arguments presented. The flexibility inherent in being a sole investigator allowed me to witness and document a diverse range of practices that included spontaneous changes of direction in the creative process as well as any shifts in timescales, locations and the personnel involved. Wherever possible I have been mindful of my own bias and sought to challenge this when necessary. The proof of its robustness and relevance can be witnessed in the publications I have produced so far but in the end it is the analyses herein that hopefully provide some lasting proof of its validity.

**Mapping Constellations: Reviewing the practice and
pedagogy of media and intermedia**

Mapping Constellations

Reviewing the practice and pedagogy of media and intermedia

The following six chapters address the parallel aims of mapping the current territories of intermediality, intermodality and hypermediality in practitioner and pedagogical terms whilst also reappraising intermediality and principally cine-theatricality's intermedial significance as central modes of 20th and 21st century practice from which all of theatre and theatre pedagogy may be informed. The chapters are divided as follows:

1. **Prologue: the work of art in an age of transition.** As a means of introduction this first chapter is intended to foreground the significant shift in arts practice brought upon by technological advancement in the last century and how this historical context reminds us of the continual transitional process that media are engaged in.
2. **The stars and constellations of media.** An exploration of current theoretical terminologies and paradigms of media and intermediality and how they may impact on the analyses.
3. **Theatre and new media in the 20th and 21st centuries: the intermedial embrace.** As a means of repositioning intermediality as

a central strand of theatrical and pedagogical praxis this chapter analyses 20th and 21st century practices in which live and technological media (specifically the filmic and tele-visual) have interacted and considers the significance of the relationship.

4. Cinema: reflections on filmic ontology and phenomenology. In

order to fully understand film's potential pedagogical contribution in cine-theatrical modes this chapter analyses the medium's *intra* and *inter*medial structures and modes of expression. Particular reference is made to the writings of André Bazin and Gilles Deleuze.

5. Theatre as hypermedium: the aesthetic and performative

challenges. Theatre has been exemplified as a 'home to all other media', an enveloping structure under which a creative nexus of live and electronic media can operate. This chapter seeks to illuminate the nature of the hypermedium and consider its potential as a pedagogical paradigm.

6. Intermedial pedagogy: a work in progress. In this, the most

comprehensive of the chapters, there is firstly an examination made of current research in to the pedagogical implications and challenges of intermediality. Secondly consideration is given to the construction of future paradigms with specific reflection on the potentiality of *constructivism, phenomenology and enculturated intermediality*.

1. Prologue: the work of art in an age of transition

To engage with the concept of intermediality in any meaningful sense there must be a willingness, potentially an exhilaration, for entering into the maelstrom of changing perceptions about art, the varying media through which art manifests itself and the ongoing, often combative, dialogic relationship between these media. In relation to this study it is imperative to begin with recognition of the turbulent cultural change that has occurred in the last one hundred years or so within western societies. From the beginning of the twentieth century the dominance of live performance and first hand artistic experience has been challenged by diverse media that have reconstituted spatial and temporal relationships through electronic and mechanical processes of communication and mass production. The influential Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan identified the cultural upheaval of this period as a movement away from what he referred to in 1962 as the 'Gutenberg galaxy' dominated by the printed word and the authorial hierarchies that this engendered into the 'electric age' which saw the creation and fruition of a plethora of new media including the moving image and also the mass reproduction and distribution of art works. During the course of the 20th century and continuing into the first decades of this century this advancement of technology and its impact on what was considered the quintessentially human act of making art has led to a continual reappraisal of what art can be, how it can be constructed and how it can be perceived.

At the beginning of the 20th century there was provocative and often politicised enthusiasm for the potentiality of mechanisation and electrification of the arts. This is immediately evident in the manifestos of The Italian Futurists. Filippo Marinetti, Emilio Settimelli and Bruno Corra wrote ebulliently of 'poly-expressive symphonies' (1915) in the theatre and on film that would seek to:

... symphonize the audience's sensibility by exploring it,
stirring up its laziest layers with every means possible;
eliminate the preconception of the footlights by throwing
nets of sensation between stage and audience; the stage
action will invade the orchestra seats, the audience.
(Marinetti et al. 1915)

Futurist cinema was conceived as a combination of media including three-dimensional forms such as sculpture and live performance. There was an evocation of multi layered, concurrent narratives as they imagined 'cinematic simultaneity and interpenetration of different times and places. We shall project two or three different episodes at the same time, one next to the other.' (Marinetti et al. 1916)

There was a growing realisation amongst artists that the camera liberated them from traditional perspectives and allowed the viewer to be spatially transported through a series of images and experience multiple viewpoints, potentially simultaneously. This revolutionary zeal is also captured in the early writings of the Russian film director Dziga Vertov:

In the face of the machine we are ashamed of man's inability to control himself, but what are we to do if we find the unerring ways of electricity more exciting than the disorderly haste of active people ... I'm an eye. A mechanical eye. I, the machine, show you a world the way only I can see it. I free myself today and forever from human immobility. I'm in constant movement. I approach and pull away from objects. I creep under them (...) This is I, the machine, manoeuvring in the chaotic movements, recording one movement after another in the most complex combinations. Freed from the boundaries of time and space, I co-ordinate any and all points of the universe, wherever I want them to be. My way leads towards the creation of a fresh perception of the world.

(1994)

Walter Benjamin, approaching the new technology from a similarly revolutionary perspective to Vertov, evaluated how it may change the nature of our dialogue with the arts and what arts could therefore contribute socially. In 1936 he wrote the seminal essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* in which he argued that the contemporary production and reproduction of works of art, endlessly facsimilated and disconnected from the authorial presence, was redefining the art object, both in its creation and its reception. It offers a prescient perspective on early 20th century concerns over the creation and appreciation of art and future

tensions to come on the relationship between mediating systems. For centuries, Benjamin argued, artworks had been created in a unique set of circumstances and appreciated uniquely in a single time and place. He recognised there had always been the potential for replicability but, he went on to say, there had only been, for many generations, limited modes of re-creation involving time consuming methods such as the 'founding and stamping' of metals. He wrote:

In principle a work of art has always been reproducible. Man-made artefacts could always be imitated by men. Replicas were made by pupils in practice of their craft, by masters for diffusing their works, and, finally, by third parties in the pursuit of gain. Mechanical reproduction of a work of art, however, represents something new. (1936 Part 1)

What intrigued Benjamin was how the relationship we have with the artwork changes within the mechanised process of reproduction that can rapidly, if not instantly, capture a copy of the original work and disconnect it from the moment in time that it was crafted. The very notion of 'authenticity' was, in his view, to be brought into question now that it was divorced from the definable originality of an author / creator. Benjamin defined the element that was lost in such processes as the 'aura', the special quality of uniqueness that was dislocated when object (artist) and subject (artwork) became distanced from one another. He wrote: 'One might subsume the eliminated element in the term "aura" and go on to say: that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art.' (ibid)

Embedded in this hypothesis are the notions of 'cultural rationalisation' and the subsequent social 'disenchantment' as developed by Max Weber in the early twentieth century. Cultural rationalisation, according to Weber, is brought about through the technological and bureaucratic modernisation of society and hence the disenchanted dismantling of auratic systems such as religion and the concept of individual genius in art. (2005) The concerns that Weber had are still being articulated today (and will be revisited later in this review) as the march of technology into the realms of human action and interaction continue to concern some in the arts and educational fields.

Walter Benjamin however, far from lamenting such a loss, welcomed the eradication of the 'cult' status of the art object built on ritualistic and hierarchical structures. In particular, and offering resonance for this study, he offers a contrast between film and live, theatrical practice as an exemplar of the redefined, democratised experience for the artists and particularly the audience. Further reference to this contrast of forms will be drawn upon later in the study but a distinction to note at this juncture is the perceptual shift that he identified. Specifically he saw the critical distance that was created for the cinematic viewer, through the de-personalised relationship with the performance, as liberating, freeing the art from its 'cultish values.' (1936 Part XI)

John Berger, writing over thirty years after Benjamin, continued this embrace of the demystification of the 'original art work'. (1972: 18) He stated, in *Ways of Seeing*, that '... the work of art is enveloped in an atmosphere of entirely bogus religiosity. Works of art are discussed and presented as though they were holy relics.' (1972:

21) I would overtly include theatrical texts and even specific performances within this analogy as plays and bodies of authorial and directorial work have undoubtedly been canonised by the theatre establishment and playwrights have been nationalised in the name of cultural capital and the subsequent economic benefits. It may be suggested that the tourist 'pilgrimages' to Stratford upon Avon are testament to this fact. Berger identified the mass reproduction of art as a key factor in diminishing this deification as now the art work is available to all and its meaning may be appropriated by anyone. On the subject of film (resonating with the ideas of The Futurists, Vertov and Benjamin) he identified the inventions of the stills and movie cameras as fundamental in altering our notion of what is perceivable in the world. He proposed that images were no longer constructed, unlike paintings, to converge 'on the human eye as on the vanishing point of infinity.' (1972: 18) Therefore, through a camera lens we could now see a world that was not necessarily constructed and composed for our appreciation and not only could it offer new perspectives but these could be presented simultaneously and potentially in contradiction with each other.

So, at the beginning of the 21st century we are the inheritors of these cultural shifts that have re-ordered the manner in which we value art and interact with it. The means of production are not only mechanised (and digitised) now but also democratised, to a large extent at least. We all have the potential to make art that can span a plethora of media and draw upon multiple perspectives that we have garnered from the media rich world that we inhabit. This has also fundamentally impacted upon our own way of functioning in the world as our own bodies engage

with media in a myriad of fashions and our perceptions of the world adjust to cope with the simultaneity of media discourses. We have, I will later suggest, become intermedial beings ourselves, enculturated by a society in constant flux.

When McLuhan initially identified the 'electric age' in the early 1960's he could not have foreseen the technology that we are now enveloped by. Accounting for this, Peter M. Boenisch proposed in 2003 that we redefine our age as 'electrONic'²⁰ (2003: 34) Within this he recognised, as did Benjamin, the subtle recalibration of perception that has occurred over several decades as our 'sensorial apparatus' has been adjusted by photography, film and computer technology. However, he does identify some significant implications of our 'electrONic' state of being:

- the once dominating visual mode of perception is substituted by multi-mediality and multi-sensoriality addressing all senses
- instead of the hierarchic uniformity and self-identity, our new 'virtual reality' leaves space for varieties, minorities and numerous identities
- in the place of segmentation, successive and causal linearity is now a nonsequential simultaneity of linked Hypertext systems

²⁰ Boenisch clarifies this specific upper case emphasis of 'ON' when he states: 'My peculiar typography of the term 'electrONic culture' stresses the reference to the Post-Gutenberg cognitive formation, distinguishing that cultural concept from electronic technology. At the same time, the upper-case 'ON' graphically reminds the reader of the inescapable ON-switches on today's computer accessories.' (2003: 45)

- instead of being a passively consuming reader, the 'user' of electrONic aesthetics becomes interactively involved. (2003: 37 – 38)

This new 'electrONic' world has fundamental implications for artists and those who perceive works of art. We now operate within a complex culture requiring new literacies that draw on multiple contexts in rapid succession and/or simultaneously. Therein we must recognise the implications for students and educators learning and teaching within such a culture of multiplicity and interactivity. To persist with a textual, logocentric pedagogy potentially denies both parties of the philosophies and methodologies to meaningfully engage with, and learn through the creation of, contemporary performance that is in itself enmeshed in this culture.

2. The stars and constellations of media

His head is made of stars, but not yet arranged into constellations.

(Elias Canetti 2011)

In the pursuit of understanding and analysing the hybridity of theatre and film I have relied upon and made persistent reference so far to *intermediality* in terms of an expression of the interdependence of live and recorded media in performance. There is a need therefore to consider the pertinences of these terms *media* and *intermedia* and to locate them within a crowded lexicon, a medial lexicon in which current writers seek distinctiveness between terms whilst simultaneously many seek to map ‘constellations’ (a metaphor invoked by both Bolter and Grusin 1999 and Rajewsky 2005) that unify a range of terminologies. In writing this chapter however I am keen to take heed of Freda Chapple’s cautionary note from our interview, when she asked: “Do we just want to create the ultimate thesaurus on intermediality?” (Oct. 2010) Inherent within the pursuit of definitions, therefore, is a more fundamental desire to critique the distinctiveness (or otherwise) of intermediality in its capacity to engage the deviser, performer and audience and ultimately to create new meanings that other theatre forms cannot articulate.

The specific term *intermedia* was first coined by the writer and Fluxus artist Dick Higgins in 1966 in his essay succinctly entitled *Intermedia* which was an attempt to describe the new hybrid forms of performance that were proliferating at the time. He noted ‘...much of the best work being produced today seems to fall between

media.’ (1966: 1) As with any new term that is invoked in search of greater clarity, it both explicates and complicates. In recent years the research field that may be referred to as *intermediality* has produced a plethora of responses to this initial yardstick with points of consensus and points of contention. Therefore, at the outset, it is pertinent to embrace the ongoing intangibility of this term *intermediality* and to note that many current theorists guard against demarcating fixed boundaries.

Irina Rajewsky reminds us:

From its beginnings, “intermediality” has served as an umbrella-term. A variety of critical approaches make use of the concept, the specific object of these approaches is each time defined differently, and each time intermediality is associated with different attributes and delimitations. Taking all of this into account, it is obvious that difficulties arise when any one individual approach to intermediality lays claim to having grasped “the intermedial” as such. (2005: 44-45)

Undoubtedly the illusive and transitional nature of the term *intermediality* is bound up in the contentions surrounding its semiotic derivation: *medium / media* and in the intervening years since Higgins’ article this predicament has been reflected upon by a range of theorists. In 1998 Joachim Paech underscored the difficulty when he stated ‘... the distinction between the definitions of artistic form and medium becomes vague because it is uncertain what specific areas are covered by terms such as medium or mediality.’ (1998: 17 - 23) Ten years later in 2008 Kati Röttger re-

evaluated the developments in this field but was still concerned by the ambiguity of the terminology and what it signified:

There is a problem that is inherent in any historical and any theoretical perspective on media, which is the formulation of a useful and widely applicable definition of media. Current literature reveals on the one hand, occasional synonymous use of the terms technologies and media; and on the other hand, the interdependence of various media and different art genres; or rather, a more or less effective correlation of sign systems inherent in every symbolic representation. This makes it difficult to distinguish clearly between apparatuses, art forms, and media. (2008: 32 – 33)

There have been several contending ontological theorisations of media in the post war period, notably those of Marshall McLuhan (1964, 1970), Niklas Luhmann (1990, 1995), Sybille Krämer (1998) and most recently the work of Lars Elleström (2010). McLuhan, often seen as the pioneer of media theory and philosophy, famously proposed in 1964 that 'the medium is the message' (1964: 9) by which he inferred that media are the progenitors and facilitators of content; be that events, the movement of people, products and services, yet we almost forget that they are there as an entity in themselves. He uses the instance of the electric light as an example of a pure medium that holds no content itself but facilitates the creation and communication of other media within it, be that the illumination of a sporting event or surgical process. Media are effectively transparent until they are literally or

figuratively revealed through another medium. McLuhan states: 'This fact, characteristic of all media, means that the "content" of any media is always another medium.' (1964: 8) In this proposal is the clear contention that media are not absolute entities that can be delineated, as they are in a constant state of absorption and redefinition with other media in order to function, a process that would later be categorised as *remediation* by Bolter and Grusin (1999).

Initially it is important to recognise the differences in perspectives amongst these principal theorists. Luhmann, for example, differentiates between *medium* and *form* (the latter being the demonstrable communicative features of media), which is a construct criticised by Krämer as being too indistinct. Yet their mutuality is perhaps more significant as they all share a common denominating factor in an agreement that media are not closed sign systems that can be essentialised or demarcated. They do not operate in isolation, constantly re-configuring their structures, and therefore affect each other ontologically. It is worth noting how Sybille Krämer echoes the thinking of McLuhan in her identification of media as transparent as 'window panes' (1998: 74), only observable when they actually take shape and have *effects*. The structure of one medium is bound up in another and our way of perceiving the meaning of a work of art therefore is bound up with our perception of the medium in which it is framed. Krämer (subtly re-defining McLuhan's definition) suggests that 'the trace of the medium is inscribed in the message.' (1998: 77)

In recent years there has been a focus on deconstructing media into their constituent modal elements, their fundamental physical, sensorial and semiotic building blocks that manifest or phenomenalyze themselves in combination as a

single medium or as inter- media. Attention has been given to the modal distinctions between media but also the structural similarities they share. Gunter Kress and Theo van Leeuwen noted in 2001 how western culture was shifting away from a culture of monomodality towards a state of multimodality. They wrote:

... not only the cinema and the semiotically exuberant performances and videos of popular culture, but also the avant-gardes of the 'high culture' arts have begun to use an increasing variety of materials and to cross the boundaries between the various art, design and performance disciplines, towards multimodal *Gesamtkunstwerke*, multi-media events and so on. (2001: 1)

This theme of multimodality is continued in the work of Lars Elleström whose recent deconstruction of (inter) media will provide a central model for analysing the filmic and theatrical media within this study. The current significance of Elleström's work in this field is evident in the fact that his notion of modalities and qualifying aspects is heavily referenced as a conceptual framework in Robin Nelson's *Introduction to Mapping Intermediality in Performance* (2010). With this in mind there is a necessity at this point to delineate Elleström's theory in a degree of detail with particular reference to his opening chapter entitled *The Modalities of Media: A Model for Understanding Intermedial Relations in Media Borders, Multimodality and Intermediality* (2010).

Elleström makes no distinction between arts and media as he states that the arts are unequivocally 'aesthetically developed forms of media' (2010: 11), yet he is keen to

discriminate between the materiality of media from the perception of them and his deconstruction reflects this notion. As an initial proposal he outlines three interrelated angles from which media should be considered; '*basic media*', '*qualified media*' and '*technical media*'. These types of media, he proposes, are characterised by the inter-relationship of four modalities: *the material*, *the sensorial*, *the spatio – temporal* and *the semiotic*. (2010: 15-16) The *material* modality is the physical interface of the medium and this can be comprised of several features in tandem. For example, he cites television as a combination of flat projection surface with moving images plus sound waves. The *sensorial* modality concerns itself with physical and mental perception and is subdivided into three modes that work in sequence: 'sense-data', the bodily receptors that translate this data and transmit to the nervous system and finally the resultant 'sensation' itself. The *spatio-temporal* modality focuses on how movement and time shifts affect our apperception of data. It may be considered, for example, how we perceive a photograph as we configure its meaning in relation to our preconceived notions of space and scale and attribute movement to figures within the image based on posture within a frozen moment of time. With a film we attribute depth to a flat image and can interpret any sequence of slow motion as signifying accelerated speed. Elleström identifies that all media have a dimensional framework that may be constituted from a combination of real and virtual height, width, depth and time. Media that have no specific temporal dimension such as a picture may be considered static and then he demarcates levels of *sequentiality* dependent on the level of temporal rigidity within a medium, from the *fixed sequentiality* of film through to the *non-fixed sequentiality* of improvised music. The *semiotic* modality, drawing on Charles Sanders Pierce's concepts of

symbol, index and icon (1903), relates to the attribution of meaning through the interpretation of signs.

Elleström qualifies these four modalities through recognition of their dynamic relationships. Interpretation is only plausible when other '*pragmatic aspects*' that affect our perceptual interpretation are considered. Firstly there is the '*contextual qualifying aspect*' described as 'the origin, delimitation and use of media in specific historical, cultural and social circumstances.' (2010: 24) This resonates with the earlier analysis of Benjamin and Berger (as well as the insights of John Dewey who will be considered in **Intermedial Pedagogy**) who identified the cultural dialogue that an arte-fact enters into when it is placed in the public domain and the authorial voice is removed or diffused. The second '*aspect*' is the '*operational qualifying aspect*' (24) pertaining to the 'aesthetic and communicative aspects' of media. (ibid) For example, what conditions are required for sound to be considered musical? He suggests that media that are significantly reliant on these two qualifying '*aspects*' in their constitution, in particular those media that may be considered art forms, should be identified as '*qualified media*' whilst those media which can function and be recognised in purely sensorial (for example still or moving image) rather than cultural and aesthetic terms may be referred to as '*basic*', although he acknowledges a fine gradation between the two. The final medium in this taxonomy is '*technical*' which describes 'any object or physical phenomenon or body that mediates, in the sense that it '*realises*' and '*displays*' basic and qualified media.' (2010: 30) A '*technical media*' (epitomized by a television set) is therefore characterised by the scope or limitation of which *basic* and *qualified* media it can mediate using a variety

of material modalities. For example, a television set can mediate a range of *qualified* media; theatre, film or music for example as well as the underlying *basic* media of light, image and sound. *Technical media*, it is noted, may absorb a range of *qualified media*, thereby signifying the receptivity of, indeed the necessity for, all three layers of media to function intermedially. It may be recognised at this point that theatre has the capacity to absorb other qualified media such as cinema and technical media such as a film screen without fundamentally altering how they phenomenalise themselves, which places it in a unique position of hypermediation that will be addressed more fully in **Theatre as hypermedium**. Robin Nelson, drawing on Elleström's principles, identifies this shift in our perception of the medium when he writes: '...the 'contextually qualified' medium of theatre, that is to say, theatre as traditionally understood in a socio-historic context as a live phenomenon in the here and now, may be in the process of being re-qualified contextually' (2010: 13); signifying the spatial and temporal mutability of modern theatre.

Having dissected Elleström's theorisation in some detail it may be suggested that it potentially appears mechanistic and risks omitting recognition of the holistic nature of media as may be advocated by a phenomenological perspective. It is important to note in response to this that Elleström stresses the pre-eminent significance of perception as he states that: 'For human beings, nothing exists outside perception' (2010: 15) and, it can also be argued, a recognition of an external reality that can be identified in material terms is not a contrary position to phenomenology. Indeed the attention Elleström pays to the sensorial experience of media engenders a strong correlation with the phenomenological approaches to perception as developed by

Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. I would also contest that the combination of cross medial *modalities* and the *qualifying aspects* afford his work both the specificity and contextual finesse that will respond effectively to the pedagogical analysis of intermediality. As noted by Charles J. Forceville in his review of Elleström's book: '... his fine grained distinctions allow for teasing out different dimensions of attributing meaning to (inter)media.' (2011: 3092)

At this stage it is important to reiterate that through Elleström's model all media at the moment of phenomenalisation are both intermodal and intermedial as a complex mix of modalities, qualifying aspects and technical/basic/qualified media are engaged in bringing any mediated event to life. Sybille Krämer goes as far as to state that 'intermediality is an epistemological condition of media-recognition.' (2003: 82) In other words, no single media can be critiqued unless there is recognition of its fundamental, intermedial (or more precisely intermodal) substructure. Laura Sava, also echoing Elleström, underscores this point when she writes: 'In recent years, the debates surrounding the notion of 'medium' have increasingly emphasized the idea that all media are 'multimodal', to the effect that the intermodal is almost inextricably folded into the intermedial.' (2010: 105) This *a priori* acceptance of media as modal composites that cannot function or be critiqued in isolation was distilled in Bolter and Grusin's unequivocal statement: 'Media need each other in order to function as media at all.' (1999: 55)

Elleström, whilst detailed in his structural analysis, does not personally offer extensive reflection on theatre or dramatic performance as media. This particular strand of theorisation is, however, pursued by a range of contemporary writers

including Kati Röttger and Peter M. Boenisch who foreground the performative qualities of a medium that can be ostensibly observed, or perceived. Firstly, Kati Röttger develops the concepts of Luhmann and Krämer by contextualising them within a performance framework. Citing Krämer she observes that:

... an analysis of theatre undertaken from a performative perspective allows the phenomena connected with the constitution of meaning, such as speech and image, to be temporal events. Thus, theatre becomes a medium that 'phenomenalizes' through its ability to make something appear and be accessible to the senses, and for this to happen it requires participation. (Röttger 2008: 83 citing Krämer 2003)

Peter M. Boenisch continues this perception of media as performative acts engaged in dialogic relationships of enactment and reception. He puts forward the notion of perceiving a medium as an 'agency' (2006: 105), a multilateral 'exchange of expression' (ibid). It is by no means a neutral conduit, rather it is infused by, and connects us to a myriad of cultural discourses. In this respect, he goes on to say, mediation creates 'authentic' realities (ibid) in which the medium and the observer are co-authors within the act rather than merely presenting a single reality.

By perceiving media as acts to be interpreted, rather than fixed objects; temporal phenomena always in transposition, we are also better placed to consider Chiel Kattenbelt's proposition (2008) for broadening the concept of media (in line with McLuhan et al.) so that the term absorbs all art forms rather than delineating one

that is conventionally associated with the communication of news and current affairs. This underscores the contention that any given medium may be perceived as a set of *modalities* and *qualifying aspects* (to adopt Elleström's terminology). Some aspects may be potentially distinct but a central feature is the fluidity between medial languages that construct the event afresh each time. Distinction and interplay are not, therefore, some irreconcilable binary. Gaudreault and Marion insist that:

... specificity by no means signifies separation or isolation; in order to comprehend this particular manifestation of the arrays of differentiation between media, the way they resemble and diverge from one another must be solidly grasped. A good understanding of a medium thus derives from its relationship to other media. (2005: 7)

This perspective is reflected in the 'both/and' approach proposed by Robin Nelson et al. in *Mapping Intermediality and Performance* (2010) and both Elleström and Irina Rajewsky (2010); the premise being that media are both different and similar. A confidence to acknowledge distinction is allied to the confidence to recognise and value transgression. Bolter and Grusin analysed this transgressive, predatory instinct of media in their seminal 1999 work *Remediation – Understanding New Media* in which the term *remediation* is used to explicate the ongoing re-negotiation between media and the interdependence that exists amongst them.

A medium is that which remediates. It is that which appropriates the techniques, forms, and social significance of

other media and attempts to rival or refashion them in the name of the real. A medium in our culture can never operate in isolation, because it must enter into relationships of respect and rivalry with other media. (Bolter and Grusin 1999: 65)

Andrew Shail develops this argument when he states that the very distinctiveness of a medium is born out of its 'concretion of borrowings from other media identities.' (2010: 8) The very existence of cinema, as will be explored in later chapters, is a catalogue of appropriation and assimilation that initially mimicked and then redefined medial codes from pre-existing forms such as theatre, fine art and opera. Whilst it may be possible to isolate and identify certain manifest features of a given *technical media* such as a television set or of a *qualified media* such as theatre they are not necessarily unique to that single medium and may be present in other mediating systems. Intermediality is one of the loci that seek to quantify, and to a degree validate, this interplay and cross-fertilisation, contending that new media are formed through these dialogical relationships. Shail highlights this when citing a personal letter from Darin Barney:

Intermediality refers to the hybridization of existing but otherwise distinct media formats and practices, in some cases representing a transitional moment that leaves these existing media intact, in others resulting in the establishment of a 'new' medium or practice which, wholly incorporating its

constituent elements, effectively replaces them. (Barney
2007 in Shail 2010: 6)

Building on the premise that medial acts are organic, fluid discourses and that media themselves are composed of a range of modalities, refashioned into new and constantly shifting composites, then it is clear to see how in recent years there has been a proliferation of terminologies to describe these discourses and interstices and hence develop an ontological and epistemic rationale. Quantifying the nature of these interconnections and new found creations gives rise to many interpretations of the exact nature of mediation (or remediation) and how the term intermediality can be applied, how it may be sub-stratified and how it is, or is not, deemed to be distinct from other domains including intratextuality, intertextuality and transmediality. Whilst I have already stated that, through the lens of Elleström's theorization, all mediated acts are intermedial it is important to chart and critique the recent terminological debates and identify my own perspective in relation to them.

Irina Rajewsky perceives intermediality as a broad church but one that can be distinguished by its ability to transgress boundaries. She writes:

In this sense, intermediality may serve foremost as a generic term for all those phenomena that (as indicated by the prefix *inter*) in some way take place *between* media. "Intermedial" therefore designates those configurations which have to do with a crossing of borders between media, and which thereby can be differentiated from *intramedial* phenomena as well as

from *transmedial* phenomena (i.e., the appearance of a certain motif, aesthetic, or discourse across a variety of different media). (Rajewsky 2005: 46)

To clarify, however, this view is not universal as other writers (e.g. Dovey & Kennedy 2006) are willing to demarcate the usage of the term intermediality to specifically refer to transmedial or intertextual referencing. I would also question Rajewsky's position at this stage and contest that the concept of transmediality is in its own right an intermedial and remedial phenomenon as the vestiges of one or more media locate themselves within another and interact with their new host/partner medium. At times it is the less overt influence of one medium upon another that is the most significant. For example, it is easy to identify the placement of the *technical media* of film (screen, surround sound etc) within a theatre space but this may be less significant intermedially than the influence of filmic temporal and spatial dimensionality upon the live actors, as in the work of Lepage. The ontological resonance of a medium can be as substantive or more so than any material presence and should be recognised as a 'crossing of a border'.

Arbitration over taxonomic disagreements is not a primary concern to my study but what this ongoing debate does indicate is that contemporary media are demanding new paradigms to quantify their interactions, particularly as traditional barriers between such parameters as high and low art or live and recorded are being dismantled. Despite some theoretical disagreement, I would argue that there is some degree of consensus on distinguishing the term intermediality, centred on the 'newness' and 'mutual transformation' resulting from the coupling of media.

Heinrichs and Spielmann write: 'Whereas intertextuality explores a text-text relationship, intermediality addresses the merger and the transformation of elements of differing media ... resulting in the creation of a new (art) form.' (2002: 5 - 6) Whilst Heinrichs and Spielmann seek to contrast intermediality with intertextuality, Kattenbelt, intersecting with the ideas of Rajewsky, offers his own comparison of the term alongside *multimediality* and *transmediality* (the latter of which he notes bears close relation to the concept of *remediation*, as defined by Bolter and Grusin).

I focus my attention on three concepts of mediality: multi-, trans- and intermediality. To phrase it very briefly, «multimediality» refers to the occurrence where there are many media in one and the same object; «transmediality» refers to the transfer from one medium to another medium (media change); and «intermediality» refers to the co-relation of media in the sense of mutual influences between media. (2008: 20 -21)

His notion of transmediality, which bears such a comparison to remediation, is not, I would argue, a particularly comprehensive delineation. I would advocate a preference for Rajewsky's definition with the caveat, as mentioned earlier, that transmediality be recognised as an intermedial and remediative process in its own right. Of some relevance though is Kattenbelt's demarcation between intermediality and multimediality. This latter term has been all too readily used as a 'catch all' by teachers and practitioners, including myself in those years at Daventry, to describe

any work in which a screen and a stage have shared performance space. It has always seemed unsatisfactory from my perspective as it hints at the use of multiple media as being for its own sensational sake rather than artistic worth. Phaedre Bell (2000) created her own distinction between these two manifestations which she referred to as 'dominant medium' productions (akin to multimedia) and 'dialogic media productions' (akin to intermediality). (43 – 44) Greg Giesekam offers his own perspective when he refers to the practice of intermedia as being distinct from multimedia in which the technology is supportive, but not integral, to the piece. In *Staging the Screen* he argues that in multimedia work the video acts merely as another of the 'apparatuses' of the stage. (2007: 8) However, in relation to intermedia he writes:

... where more extensive interaction between the performers and various media reshapes notions of character and acting, where neither the live material nor the recorded material would make much sense without the other, and where often the interaction between the media substantially modifies how the respective media conventionally function and invites reflection upon their nature and methods, I would suggest the term '*intermedia*' is more appropriate. (ibid)

This distinction is a central focus of my own study; when media become 'conceptually fused' (Higgins 1966) or create, as Kattenbelt phrases it, a 'mutual affect'. (2008: 25) In this process there is a constancy of new compositions in which the exchange between media reconfigures the dialogue in countless patterns.

Irina Rajewsky develops her own thesis of intermedial categories with an initial distinction between *synchronic* and *diachronic*, as delineated by Jürgen Müller (and iterated by Rajewsky 2005) who stated that intermedial studies may include '(both a) ... *synchronic* research perspective, which develops a typology of specific forms of intermediality, and the *diachronic* perspective of an intermedial history of media.' (Müller 2002: 7) Rajewsky herself is clear to point out the productive dialogue between these two perspectives but lays some greater emphasis on the synchronic:

It is in this way - to return to the three fundamental distinctions underlying different conceptions of intermediality - that my approach to intermedial phenomena follows a synchronic direction; it seeks to distinguish different manifestations of intermediality, and to develop a uniform theory for each of them. However, this approach does not exclude a historical dimension. Instead, it presumes that any typology of intermedial practices must be historically grounded. (2005: 50)

In seeking connections between intermedial practice and intermedial pedagogy I intend (as can be seen from the explications of Elleström alongside later reflections on the 20th and 21st century lineage of intermediality) to place a certain focus on the synchronic perspective in relation to medial and intermedial identification whilst also locating this in an historical context. This offers a heuristic platform on which a pedagogical rationale may be constructed and given validation alongside the current canonical structures of theatre.

Rajewsky delineated her synchronic stratification of intermediality into three subcategories: *medial transposition*, *medial combination* and *intermedial referencing*. (2005: 51 & 2010: 55) *Transposition* in this case refers to the relocating of one 'media product' within another medium (film adaptation of a novel for example) and is reminiscent of Kattenbelt's notion of transmediality, whilst her definition of *medial combination* resonates both with Gieseckam's iteration of *multimedia* and with Kattenbelt's notions of intermedia. *Intermedial referencing*, which she refers to as a narrow definition, specifically relates to the 'evocation or imitation' (Rajewsky 2005: 52) of one medium's strategies within another, such as the use of direct address to camera in film as an 'evocation' of a theatrical aside. I would suggest that this final category is actually a very rich seam of intermedial practice and theorisation and converges with her earlier explication of transmediality. Allied to the clarification of these terms, she is also at pains to clarify the differences she perceives between *intramedial* and *intermedial*. In Rajewsky's view, *intramedial* is discourse within a single medium which self references itself (as per Heinrichs and Spielmann's definition of *intertextual*: 2002).

These terminological constructs, offered by Kattenbelt and Rajewsky in particular, may at times diverge in their specific definitions, but overall (and in conjunction with Elleström's modalities) they provide a degree of structural clarity with which to interrogate my own practice and that of others. Whilst this manifestly highlights the complexity of this field of study I would contest that the significance of such observations or contentions has wide ranging implications from a pedagogical perspective as it alerts us to the challenge of how we may construct and then

analyse any medium / media as their constellations continue to expand rapidly outwards.

It is arguably the case that any intermedial event demands a significant level of diverse media literacy that is potentially only decoded by the 'electrONic intelligensia' (Boenisch 2003: 39) and is impenetrable for other groups of which students may be a part. Whilst it may be acknowledged that the younger generations are 'digital natives' (Prensky 2001), familiar with new, technological media, it does not follow that they possess the faculties to decode intermedial work and hence develop ownership over such practice. In **Intermedial Pedagogy** and subsequent case study chapters I identify what I refer to as *enculturated intermediality* as an ontological state for contemporary society, in that our 'sensory norm' (Auslander 1999: 34) is now adjusted to perceive of digital media as 'natural' (ibid) and we have adopted a mediatised corporeality in our behaviour and speech. However, this is not necessarily synonymous with a critical self-awareness of this mode of being and my contention is that intermedial pedagogy may play a crucial role in phenomenalisng and interpreting this mediatised state of being.

It may be considered that the implicit demand of intermediality is fluency, both in a range of intramedial languages for each respective media involved and also eloquence with the meta-linguistic structure of intermediality that draws on a spectral combination of nuanced *modalities* and *qualifying aspects*. This complex layering and cross referencing of contextual as well as technical knowledge invests intermedial practice and education with a very particular set of challenges.

In drawing this chapter to a close I would wish to reflect on three central themes that are constants within the debate. Firstly, media are not fixed phenomena that can be isolated and analysed for their purity of lineage. There is a consensus that for a medium to exist it has had to grow through interaction with and appropriation of pre-existing media and to then continue to exist it has to engage in a constant remediating negotiation with all allied media, both extant and emergent. Secondly, if this premise is accepted, then the notion of intermediality; interaction between media and their modal substructures, is no longer a peripheral, technological sub-classification of arts practice, but rather an ever present process necessary for any mediated/artistic act to be constructed and interpreted. Finally, this places greater significance on understanding the implications of any of the aforementioned intermedial and concurrent intramedial processes that may exist within the same performance event. In foregrounding the extent of the discourse between media and their interdependence we begin to raise significant questions about the relevance and responsiveness of contemporary theatre pedagogy and contemporary theatre pedagogues. To distil such interrogations into a single query for now it may be apposite to ask: *Is it enough for educators in this field to recognise that other media encroach into the theatrical domain or do we have a responsibility to analyse and evaluate their actual impact?*

3. Theatre and new media in the 20th and 21st centuries: the intermedial embrace

The analytical case studies that follow on from these contextualising chapters concern themselves with late 20th and early 21st century intermedial practices, yet there is an historical narrative to intermediality which requires reappraisal if we are to consider the status and ramifications of hybrid media performance as a distinct form of pedagogical practice. As previously cited, Dick Higgins coined the term intermedia in 1966, yet the interdependence and interaction between media had been explored and performatively expressed in multiple forms before this point. This chapter, in its consideration of the birth of the 'electric age' up to the present day, highlights theatre's longstanding embrace of technology and its receptivity to integrating new media, specifically film and the tele-visual in relation to this study, beyond a purely scenographic aesthetic.

It is arguable that theatre has centralised, at the expense of a more pluralistic perspective, the significance of authorial dramatic text *and* particularly the live corporeal presence. As Meike Wagner succinctly states: 'The live body of the actor, corporeal *presence*, has become the main criteria by which to define theatre.' (2006: 126) This perspective has then been concretised within 20th (and some 21st) century literature and thereby in educational paradigms from secondary through to university programmes. The 1990's however saw a particularly combative discourse over the territory of performance and its essential qualities. In 1993 Peggy Phelan

wrote *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* in which she argued that performance resists and should resist reproducibility. She stated that performance was unique in its incapacity to be 'saved, recorded, documented' and that to engage in reproduction 'it betrays and lessens the promise of its own ontology.' (1993: 146) This contention was countered by Philip Auslander in *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (1999) who argued that there was no fundamental difference between live and digitally, mediatised performance, his argument being that modern cultures had reframed what live could be conceived of, such as 'live' television or 'live' relay of images at a concert. However, Auslander's view was not left uncontested and Erika Fischer-Lichte's book *Ästhetik des Performativen* published in 2004, which was translated as *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics* (2008) was written in defence of co-presence as the defining, ontological feature of performance. Whilst this initially seems reductive, her later theory that the absence of live actors in mediatised performance (at least for temporary periods) actually reinforces their significance and the aura of their liveness, has resonance for this study. This condition of vulnerability and contiguous significance will be returned to within the case studies.

So into this century the debate still rages as to the fundamentals of the live performance paradigm. On occasions the arguments become overly reductive and essentialist yet at another point, if unintentionally, they illuminate the opportunities of intermediality to reveal the nature of our 'being-in-the-world'. Whilst it is important to recognise the potential for, and resonant history of, a direct actor/audience dynamic stripped of as much demonstrably mediated material as

possible, it may, if left unchecked as a perspective, limit and resist contiguous paradigms of performance that in no sense 'lessen' its ontology. To paraphrase Robin Nelson's explication of media as *both* distinct *and* intermedial simultaneously (2010), performance and specifically theatre (to delineate the qualified media) can be, in my estimation, *both* essentially co-present at any given moment *and* essentially mediated at another turn or indeed simultaneously.

The first aim within this chapter is to reconsider intermediality's position within the continuum of 20th and 21st century theatre and to identify the fusions of corporeal and technological practices that influenced performance makers and writers and led them towards and then beyond the specific term as identified by Higgins in the 1960's. Secondly, the aim is to identify key ontological shifts brought about by the specific historical development of film and related tele-visual practices and their emergent relationship with live theatrical performance. Such analyses will concurrently illuminate the potential artistic and hence pedagogical attractions and disenchantments (to cite Max Weber) that are wrapped within the embrace.

The instinct to conceive of intermediality and theatre as an intermittent partnership is to misread the complex lineage of medial development. It is also a misnomer to identify professional intermedial practice as a consciously late 20th and early 21st century phenomenon that can be neatly appended to a central narrative of theatre as a corporeal act, historically rooted in human co-presence. Whilst we may now live in the 'electrONic' age, as Boenisch would suggest, performance has never been detached from technology and the potentiality of new media. There is an undeniable longevity and significance in the correlation between the live, theatrical medium and

technological media and it is a relationship that is constantly being re-formed. Steve Dixon writes:

Throughout the centuries, theater (*sic*) has been quick to recognise and utilise the dramatic and aesthetic potentials of new technologies (...) Digital performance is an extension of a continuing history of the adoption and adaptation of technologies to increase performance and visual art's aesthetic effect and sense of spectacle, its emotional and sensorial impact, its play of meanings and symbolic associations, and its intellectual power. (Dixon 2007a: 39 - 40)

If there is, as Steve Dixon suggests, a 'continuing history' then perhaps within that intermedial and transmedial lineage lies the justification for *and* structural core of a new pedagogical paradigm. Conversely, this extended history may also suggest that theatre pedagogy has also had time to adapt organically and is well set to respond to current digital advances without the need for any radical or significant reconsideration at this juncture. Of course the current state of affairs may be neither of these or a gradated combination of both.

It is undoubtedly problematic to select a point in time to begin such historical analysis as there is an argument to correlate theatre and technology throughout millennia. However in this case the invention and subsequent mass usage of electricity can be postulated as a paradigm shift (as identified by McLuhan 1962) in how the live theatrical event could be manipulated, enhanced and, as the last

century progressed, challenged. The potential for electricity to fundamentally change our relationship with the world around us gathered momentum in the early twentieth century and theatre practitioners and designers such as Wassily Kandinsky and Adolphe Appia recognised the potency of electrical lighting and sound to enhance, and to a degree, construct the *mise en scène*. (Wiens 2010) Beyond this intramedial experimentation, theatre's mutability was seized upon by artists and artistic movements seeking to redefine the artistic interaction between performer / creator and the audience. As outlined in the **Prologue** the Futurists aggressively pursued the development of performance that integrated all mediating forms into what became known as *synthetic* theatre, expressed as: 'Painting + sculpture + plastic dynamism + words in freedom + composed noise (intonarumori) + architecture = synthetic theatre.' (Marinetti et al. 1916: 15) Such reconfiguring of the potential of theatre was a recurring theme throughout the early part of the century and opened up conceptual possibilities for digital and intermedial practitioners in later years.

One of the fundamental questions at the heart of the debate within such movements as Futurism, Constructivism and Bauhaus was a reappraisal of the role of the physical body and its relationship to the mechanised, industrial environment. In what form and to what end should the human body engage in the performance act? Was the corporeal presence of the actor's body and voice required in an age where rapid mechanisation and technological change were forcing a redefinition of our relationship to the physical world? Telephonic and televisual invention had revealed

new possibilities in how we construct spatial relationships and engage in human-to-human contact. (Wiens 2010)

The artists of the Bauhaus were particularly interested in how society may benefit from an engagement with mechanical processes. Oskar Schlemmer and Lázló Moholy-Nagy, the two principal architects of Bauhaus Totaltheater, sought a synthesis between man and machine in a mechanical 'organism' that utilised gigantic geometric puppets and stage machinery to augment the corporeal presence. However such experiments and visions were always in danger of diminishing the significance of the human presence. As their work progressed both men envisaged a theatrical stage that removed the physical actor entirely. Matthew Wilson Smith noted that: 'Moholy-Nagy (...) calls for the replacement of human actors by mechanical devices, "since in our day equipment can be constructed which is far more capable of executing the purely mechanical role of man than man himself.' (2002: 91)

There was also an ongoing re-negotiation of the traditional relationship between literary dramatic text and the physical theatrical expression. If immediacy and spontaneity of action were to be given priority, as the Futurists may argue, and if the visual image epitomised by silent cinema was taking on a new privileged position within culture then the place of the written, dramatic text had to be questioned. Historically the spectatorial act, in bourgeois as opposed to populist forms, had been constructed and perceived within a linearity that followed on from the writing of the text. Inherently it is a hierarchical progression that has been central to western traditions of theatre making and drama studies, in which the text and the dramatic

structure are anointed as the sources of the creative act. Whilst this interpretation of process is still in evidence in the early 20th century, such as in Meyerhold's 'Theatre of the Straight Line'; the four stage sequential process: author – director – actor – spectator (Braun 1969), directors, including Meyerhold, were seeking new ways to construct theatre in which the performance text could be constructed in three dimensional space without an *a priori* dramatic text. In considering the works of Craig, Appia and Meyerhold himself, Christopher Baugh writes:

Was it possible, for example, to make a work of theatre without a prior work of dramatic literature? Was it possible to create a work of theatre art out of the materials of the theatre itself? Might an audience respond to the core materials of theatre in their own right – much as one might respond to abstract colour, texture and form? (Baugh 2005: 42)

Once this presumed interconnection is broken between dramatic text and performance then the potential for conscious intermedial cross-pollination multiplies exponentially as theatre becomes more receptive to a wider spectrum of influences and *modus operandi*. If 'text' can be 'written' visually, uncoupled from the traditionally scripted medium, then the opportunities to draw upon and gravitate towards non literary forms in the inception of work becomes ever more seductive. Throughout Europe the medial fluency and hypermediality²¹ of theatre was

²¹ *Hypermediality* refers to theatre's capacity to appropriate and (re)present all other media within its forms and will be addressed more fully in **Theatre as hypermedium: the aesthetic and performative challenges**.

capitalised upon by artistic movements such as Dada and Surrealism seeking new forms of expression that ran contrary to an established aesthetic that may have been considered bourgeois.

Prescient of what may now be referred to as post-dramatic practice such movements and practitioners eschewed linear, character led narratives and sought to construct sensorial, spectacles with simultaneity of media. Gertrude Stein notably, in the early part of the 20th century and the inter-war years, created what became known as Essence Theatre and Landscape Theatre, which privileged non-sequential time and simultaneous or randomised spatialisation of events. However it is worth noting that such an attempt to transmediate the temporal and spatial structures of photography, film and other relatively new media was not without its challenges and Stein's work was notoriously difficult to realise on stage.

In the post war period experimentation took live performance in multiple directions and gave rise to several descriptive terms for the new hybrid forms including 'inter-arts' and 'theatre of mixed means' as proposed by Richard Kostelanetz in 1967. Critiquing the work of leading avant-garde practitioners such as Anna Halprin, Robert Whitman and Dick Higgins from the 1950's and 1960's, Kostelanetz contested that mixed media work that blended tele-visual images, recorded audio and photography (as in the work of such companies as *USCO*) required a new set of critical faculties that could not simply draw upon a mono-medial aesthetic.

... it demands critics, as well as audiences, possessed of a
polyliterate and generalised sensibility which is responsive to
dance, speech, sound, image, setting and space, as well as

overarching thematic statements. “All minds should contain several vocabularies,” R.P. Blackmur once wrote and the new theatre demands an audience that has sloughed off a commitment to a particular artistic category in order to remain wholly open to the total field of impressions that a multiply communicating mixed-means theatrical performance offers. (1970: 276 – 277)

In the closing decades of the 20th century and initial years of this century there has been an ever-increasing awareness, practical exploration and theorisation related to the convergence of media within the theatrical space. With the introduction of digital technologies practitioners had the tools to embed complex live/filmic interactions into their work and compose, improvise and edit within the rehearsal environment. Robert Lepage exemplifies this practitioner led movement as his work developed from utilising simple projections in early solo pieces such as *Needles and Opium* (1991) through to complex layering of filmic images in *The Blue Dragon* (2011). As will be further discussed in **Butterflies**, Lepage collaborates both with performers and technologists in the rehearsal space. In recognition of the significance of his practice, a body of theorisation built up around the work to analyse the creative process and what new meanings were being created in the ‘in between’ spaces. Saša Dundjerović referred to Lepage’s particular approach as *techno en scène* (2006)²² and it illustrates the mutation of language and re-appraisal of practice that became prevalent in response to theatrical experimentation in this

²² See **Butterflies** for further analysis of *techno en scène*.

field and, as was explored in **The stars and constellations of media**, continues to preoccupy media and intermedial theorists to this day.

Theatre and film: respect and rivalry

There has been a particularly intimate relationship of ‘respect and rivalry’ (Bolter and Grusin 1999) between the two media of cinema and theatre ever since the inception of the electrified medium in the late 19th century. Theatre originally played a fundamental part in the aesthetic development of cinema and, in the nascent years of film, theatre immediately adopted a surrogate role as many early films were screened within theatre buildings. In its earliest form cinema had little option but to remediate the practices of theatre and place many conventions of the stage (such as melodramatic gesture) unadulterated on to the screen as actors and directors were schooled in the spatial and temporal principles of theatricality. Gaudreault and Marion, as cited by Andrew Shail, refer to this type of intermedial relationship as ‘negotiated’:

Gaudreault and Marion’s ‘negotiated intermediality’ refers to those alliances established, by a new medium, with existing media forms, usually for the purpose of borrowing the cultural prestige of these existing institutions through claims of similarity. In the case of cinema, the earliest of these alliances (established in the early 1910s) included the institutions of the legitimate theatre and periodical short fiction ... (Shail 2010: 9)

The emergent 20th century film industry, with pioneers such as Georges Méliès, was quick to capitalise on the interplay between the media, interweaving film with live action in a theatrical setting as early as 1905. In that year Méliès made a film entitled the *Pills of the Devil*, a Faustian legend in which the character on screen was seen to fall towards hell before finally tumbling on to the stage. Following on from Méliès were a host of avant-garde practitioners who saw the potential for film to reconfigure the performer and audience relationship with theatre. Influenced by the work of Alfred Jarry and the early Surrealists, Antonin Artaud experimented in multiple media during the 1920's and early 1930's and recognised the transmedial potential of utilising the form of one medium within another. Artaud developed his visual and visceral style, not through the singular act of theatre making but through an contemporaneous experimentation in film. Work such as *The Butchers Revolt* (1930) broke away from the 'filmed theatre' style so prevalent at the time and drew on his imagistic theatre practices. (Barber 2006: 24)

Erwin Piscator developed a dialectical relationship between the illusion of the stage and the realism of the filmic image (Gieseckam 2007: 42), whilst others such as the designers Miroslav Kouril and Josef Svoboda saw the opportunity for spatial liberation, creating virtual space within the limited confines of a theatre building. Here it is important to note that, whilst acknowledging the close remediated bond of these media, it is also crucial to highlight the new potential for spatial and temporal dislocations that cinema brought with it. Kouril suggested the concept of 'stage kinetics' (Dundjerović 2007: 98) in which technology, including film, may be

harnessed to create dynamic fluid movement within space. Birgit Wiens, citing Benjamin, notes how this potential was perceived:

It was Walter Benjamin who observed that film offers an “immense and unexpected field of action” which allows for options that transgress the “prison world” of the space of nearness and to split these up into a “prism” of spaces through which “we undertake far and adventurous journeys” (Benjamin 1977a: 35) According to this formulation, space in its capacity as communication and action space, was no longer perceived as something ‘given’ but as an occurrence. (Wiens 2010: 92)

Space in theatrical terms could now be liberated through the aesthetics of the film camera, which could, as Vertov suggested, free us from ‘boundaries of time and space’. (1994) Whereas theatre had traditionally been tied to a unified, single space with a single perspective occupied by the audience, it could now transport the performer and viewer to multiple realms in quick succession; temporal and spatial logic could now be collapsed in an instant. Roberts Blossom, writing in *The Tulane Drama Review* in 1966, noted that the film/theatre dialogue was at that time manifesting itself more and more in a single performance space that Blossom and Michael Kirby referred to as ‘*filmstage*’. This proliferation may partly be attributed to the availability of affordable cameras and televisual equipment in the 1960s and partly due to the experimentation of avant-garde practitioners. The ubiquity of such practice is now in evidence across the globe as equipment becomes evermore

accessible and screen based media are now situated at the heart of our cultural and social environments.

Over the course of the 20th century the parent and child relationship of theatre and film shifted so that respect, indeed the need for borrowed respectability, transformed into rivalry and re-appropriation. In Susan Sontag's article *Film and Theatre* from 1966 (in the same *Tulane* edition as Blossom's article) she noted how the early film *Dr Caligari* (1920) borrowed lighting techniques from the theatre producer Max Reinhardt but likewise the Expressionist theatre immediately borrowed from Expressionist film. (1966: 34) In the coming decades what had initially been a predominantly unidirectional remedial process in which theatre was co-opted into film became a dialogical relationship in which the filmic medium (and subsequently the tele-visual medium) began to gain cultural and potentially intermedial dominance over their 'rival'. Gavin Bolter suggests that the emergent intermedial relationship between old and new media is only initially governed by deference, which then gives way to the vagaries of culture as the newer form aims to impose a degree of dominance in order to make a 'claim on our cultural attention.' (2007: 26)

Philip Auslander (2006) contests that we have to accept the cultural dominance of certain media in order to fully understand intermedial relationships. He identifies the growing dominance of the internet in the 21st century and arguably over the 20th century we moved to a point where film and then television claimed cultural dominance over theatre. Some practitioners such as Grotowski and Peter Brook sought to resist this suffocative embrace and were seen to make a conscious

movement towards what Christopher Balme (2008) refers to as 'media essentialism' and away from spectacular, technologically enhanced theatre. They focused on stripping down the live event to potent acts of complicity in which the actors and spectators shared as intimate a space as possible. Grotowski in 1969 referred to '...the integration of borrowed mechanisms (movie screens on stage, for example) (as)...all nonsense.' (1986: 19) ²³

Despite this counter-movement in theatre there has continued to be an irrepressible confluence of live and filmic media within a single stage space. In the last forty or fifty years practitioners and companies such as Guy Cassiers, Robert Wilson, *Forkbeard Fantasy* and *The Builders Association* have taken full advantage of accessible analogue and now digital equipment and processes. There are also many examples from *Kneehigh Theatre's* recent productions of *Brief Encounter* and *Steptoe and Son* through to lavish West End recreations of *The Bodyguard* or *Chariots of Fire* that indicate how theatre now pays homage to cinematic and televisual content and aesthetics, perhaps in an attempt to remain 'in tune' with an audience accustomed to the virtual image. Greg Giesekam wryly notes that '... it is believed that such work will appeal to the media-savvy younger audiences which theatres are desperate to attract.' (2007: 4) Whatever the intentions, the result is a constant dialogical flux. Currently it may be suggested that the digital media of film, television, the internet and social media occupy a cultural dominance but it would be foolish to assume that this is a static position or one in which theatre's only role is to absorb other media. The merest of glances at either Lars Von Trier's film *Dogville*

²³ See **Intermedial pedagogy: a work in progress** for further reflection on media essentialism in artistic and pedagogical disciplines.

(2003), which places the modalities and operational aspects of theatre at the heart of the *mise en scène*, or at the theatrical productions ‘staged’ on *Second Life*²⁴ will remind us that theatre is a resilient, transgressive and highly mutable medium.

The ‘seventh art’ perspective

Ricciotto Canudo famously referred to film as the ‘seventh art’ in 1923 as it joined, in his view, the pantheon of six other distinctive art forms: architecture, sculpture, painting, music, dance and poetry. He perceived film as a synthesis of spatial and temporal arts and wrote as early as 1911: ‘The new manifestation of Art should really be more precisely *a Painting and a Sculpture developing in Time* [...] in a most astonishing apotheosis, *the Plastic Art in Motion* will arise.’ (1993: 59) It is an early indication that since the birth of cinema there has been a continuous reflection on its relationship to other media and its intermedial status. It is important to remember therefore that film theorists as well as writers on theatre have converged on this field and have sought to elucidate what is distinctive or hybridised about the medium of film. It is valuable to observe that film, from within the cinematic community, was and still continues to be perceived of as mutable in its construction and aesthetic expression.

Ágnes Pethő in her 2010 article *Intermediality in Film: A Historiography of Methodologies* notes how Sergei Eisenstein saw film as montage, embracing a variety of arts. She writes: ‘In all his works, at the same time, he maintained a highly

²⁴ *Second Life* is an online virtual world developed by Linden Lab and launched in 2003.

synesthetic view upon cinema, in which elements characteristic to each of the arts or to each of the senses were combined in a unique way' (51), and later goes on to identify a range of writers including Joachim Paech, André Bazin and Robert Stam who have all examined the transmedial and intermedial qualities of film. André Bazin considered at length the dialogic nature of cinema and theatre in *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma?* (*What is Cinema?*) first published between 1958 and 1962. Whilst acknowledging several shared features about the two media he also proposed that film was fundamentally different to theatre as the human being is not central to the creation and illusion of film. 'The human being is all-important to the theater. (*sic*) The drama on the screen can exist without actors.' (2005: 102) Although we may find exceptions to this rule in the works of such playwrights as Samuel Beckett or in contemporary installation art it is perhaps an indication that such writers and practices owe a transmedial debt to cinema as the corporeal significance of the actor and their body is challenged. In contrast to more contemporary writers on intermedial theatre, Bazin also suggested that film in relation to theatre had an 'inferiority complex in the presence of an older and more literary art.' (2005: 87) Whether this is still a plausible argument in the 21st century is highly debatable. Indeed the argument over the remediative rivalry between stage and screen has perhaps been superseded by a recognition of how new media are *repurposing* and *absorbing* (to borrow Bolter and Grusin's terminology 1999) all existing media including film within a plethora of digitised forms and platforms as suggested by Auslander (2006). David N. Rodowick now refers to film as an 'incredible shrinking medium' (2007) in the face of such an onslaught and Pethő notes that cinema and

film are now often bracketed under the more generic media reference of 'moving images.' (2010: 48)

From my own perspective it is important to note how film, as with any other medium, is being mutated in terms of its modalities and qualifying aspects. The process of remediation is perpetual and the rise of the internet and the potential this creates for a collage of creative stimuli should be acknowledged. However what this also reflects is that film, whilst not necessarily in its original material form, is now a readily available source of theatrical construction as we can make, disseminate and appropriate material (as will be identified in all three case studies) with a rapidity that Bazin or his contemporaries could barely have envisaged.

Television: a not so brief intermission

I hate television. I hate it as much as peanuts. But I can't stop eating peanuts.

(Orson Welles 1956)

Whilst film may be regarded as the overarching screen based medium apparent in the case studies (alongside the live performers), it must be acknowledged that hybrids of televisual images are also present, both in *Seven Streams of the River Ota* as analysed within **Butterflies**²⁵ and in *The Good Actor* as analysed in **Bells and Meteorites**. Television, as Welles alluded to, has become a pervasive and irresistible global medium, which has absorbed film and found a means of mutating within the

²⁵ Further analysis of the 'intimate' and 'immediate' nature of television is outlined in **Butterflies**.

internet, be that through *i-player* platforms, online televisual archives or online broadcasters.

In many respects television shares the modalities of film²⁶ as the material modality for both, for example, is constituted of a flat projection surface with moving images plus sound waves. Likewise in spatial terms they function in height, width and virtual depth. From a temporal perspective however there are some differences as television is often constructed upon a live relay of images, which may be seen as non fixed or partially fixed sequentiality unlike the fixed sequentiality of film. (Elleström 2010: 19) This televisual perception of the 'live' creates its own theatricalised hybrid which will be explored in the Lepage case study.

Our cultural familiarity with the 'liveness' of television suggests that it is within the 'pragmatic aspects', both *contextually* and *operationally* (2010: 24) that we initially find delineations between our understanding or expectations of film and television. Culturally we have 'invited' television into our home and engaged in a particular intimacy with it as both a *technical* and *qualified* medium, thereby constructing a complex relationship to be negotiated by broadcasters, performers and audiences. As Sir David Frost once famously said: 'Television is an invention that permits you to be entertained in your living room by people you wouldn't have in your home.' (2005: 128) The small scale of television as a *technical medium* permits it to infiltrate our domestic lives and our proximity to the set itself creates an intimacy with the events it portrays. David Zemmels in *Liveness and Presence in Emerging*

²⁶ See **Cinema: reflections on filmic ontology and phenomenology** for a specific deconstruction of film using Elleström's model.

Communication Technologies (2004) notes the impact of how television phenomenalizes itself in front of the viewer:

... while the televisual experience is spatially distinct from the objects it is representing, it is perceived (correctly or not) as temporally similar to the live experience, to 'being there.' The ease of access to the televisual experience, its ability to bring events from the outside into the viewer's home, allowed it to displace theatre and film as the dominant cultural discourse. (2004: 6)

Auslander comments that television in its early (predominantly live) incarnations was 'imagined as theatre' (1999: 22) in order to rival actual theatre attendance. However, he also notes that as television became more sophisticated it began to mimic the modalities of cinema. He writes: 'Once the cameras could enter the set and shoot from reverse angles, the syntax of televisual discourse became that of cinematic discourse...' (1999: 21) In the 21st century, television as a discreet medium can still engender a feeling of intimacy and liveness to rival theatre but can also utilise filmic techniques and modes of representation as can be seen in *Sky's* recent set of epic dramas on *Sky Atlantic* which have enticed major film stars including Kate Winslet and Steve Buscemi to the 'small screen'. Conversely film apes and absorbs the immediacy of the televisual when it wishes to do so, as may be witnessed in French cinéma vérité. This hybridity is accentuated by the fact that theatre practitioners such as *Forced Entertainment* and *The Wooster Group* have appropriated televisual techniques and discourses for many years. In their

intermedial and transmedial experimentation the filmic has become domestic as we view the epic on a small scale such as in the work of *Zoo Indigo*, who remediated the film *Thelma and Louise* into a small-scale piece entitled *Under the Covers* (2012), exploring themes of motherhood and loss. Concurrently the televisual has become epic as intimate moments are projected on to large screens within the theatre space such as in *Supervision* (2005) by *The Builders Association*. Whilst the predominant analytical frame in this study is filmic rather than televisual, this deterritorialisation of the two media and the ontological hybrids it creates will be explored in the case studies.

To conclude this part of the chapter therefore it is crucial to recognise the impact of such ubiquitous developments on the teaching of theatre and performance as media systems as it is undoubtedly worthy of documentation and analysis. The current cultural dominance of the digital image, be that in film, television or the internet cannot be ignored pedagogically, not simply because it exists but because within these new media reside the modalities of theatre, refashioned over the course of a century or more yet still accessible. They are not merely the preserve of media studies but an identifiable remediation of theatrical practice and hence should be considered within any pedagogical framework for contemporary theatrical practice. As a small postscript to this section it is worth citing the thoughts of Sergei Eisenstein who, in 1953, looked back on the early development of film and remarked:

It is always pleasing to recognize again and again the fact that our cinema is not altogether without parents and without pedigree, without a past, without the traditions and rich

cultural heritage of the past epochs. It is only very thoughtless and presumptuous people who can erect laws and an aesthetic for cinema, proceeding from premises of some incredible virgin-birth of this art! (1953: 232)

An equivalent and reciprocal case could easily be made for theatre as cinema and related televisual media are both its children but also now its parents in the cyclical process of remediation. Pedagogy undoubtedly has a responsibility to valorise and engage in this cycle if intermediality is to be considered in its fullest and most dynamic form.

4. Cinema: reflections on filmic ontology and phenomenology

The practice of *imitating the dog*, Robert Lepage and Lightwork is so suffused with cinematic aesthetics that it is apposite within this chapter, and for all subsequent analyses of the particular intermedial paradigm of cine-theatricality, to consider the precise nature of the filmic medium and its relationship in terms of similarities and divergences with live theatre. In the previous chapter it was acknowledged that film theorists have had a long standing awareness of cinema's dialogue with related arts but to critique the work of *imitating the dog* and other companies requires a more detailed analysis of how film converges with or is distinguishable from other media. The very need to reflect upon filmic ontology and phenomenology discreetly in this context also highlights the potential ramifications for cine-theatrical teaching and learning as students of theatre engage in the making and critiquing of such ontologically mutated forms.

The post second world war era saw a proliferation in ontological, phenomenological and semiotic reflections on film. In this period the theorisations of filmic (and the philosophical paradigms that it may be considered in relation to) were brought to the fore most notably in the work of writers such as André Bazin, Erwin Panofsky, Gilles Deleuze, Stanley Cavell and Peter Wollen. What follows then is a brief overview of some of the key approaches to theorising film over the last half century and specifically in *Deleuze and the Imaging of Movement and Time* attention will be

given to Gilles Deleuze's conceptions of movement and time within film as these will significantly frame the pedagogic inquiry in the case study chapters.

As already noted, André Bazin wrote the collected work *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma?* between 1958 and 1962. It was an attempt to consider the photographic and cinematic image in relation to and in contrast with the existing plastic arts and its social context as a new medium. In the first essay *The Ontology of the Photographic Image* (1958) he identifies the pursuit of reality as a crucial mode of film and this is echoed in the words of Panofsky who wrote: 'The medium of the movies is physical reality as such.' (1959: 31) Bazin identified that originality in photography and the cinematic image fundamentally lay in the objective nature of the process. He wrote:

For the first time, between the originating object and its reproduction there intervenes only the instrumentality of a non-living agent. For the first time an image of the world is formed auto-matically, without the creative intervention of man. The personality of the photographer enters into the proceedings only in his selection of the object to be photographed and by way of the purpose he has in mind.
(2005: 7)

This objectivity, he argued, creates a 'quality of credibility' (8) that is not present in any other picture construction due to the absence of man: '*nous jouissons de son absence.*' (15)

Such emphasis on the realism of film and the absence of man in the creative, meaning making process was later challenged by Peter Wollen who proposed that Bazin's formulation of filmic ontology failed to acknowledge the significance of interiority or fiction. (1975) He suggested that Bazin's focus on realism created certain false delimitations on its ability to conjure up a complex interior narrative to be interpreted by the spectator and that Bazin's position seemed to deny the potential for film to generate fictions inferred by the image. It would certainly appear, at an initial glance, difficult to defend a valorisation of realism in the 21st century when a significant degree of filmic production is created through digital manipulation of the image to the extent that the presence of human enterprise (post exposure) is beyond refute. However, on closer reading of Bazin and Stanley Cavell's defence of Panofsky and Bazin's position on realism, what becomes clear is that their interpretation of realism in this context is not an explication of pure physical reality. As Cavell states:

It may seem that this starting point – the projection of reality – begs the question of the medium of film, because movies and writing about movies, have from their beginnings also recognised that film can depict the fantastic as readily as the natural. What is true about that idea is not denied in speaking of movies as “communicating by way of what is real”: the displacement of objects and persons from their natural sequences and locales is itself an acknowledgement of the physicality of their existence. (1979: 16)

Indeed Bazin reminds the reader that 'photography ranks high in the order of surrealist creativity because it produces a image that is a reality of nature, namely, an hallucination that is also a fact.' (1960: 9) Therefore whilst recognising film (and its remediative lineage within photography) as having a specific capacity to realise the world 'as seen' this is not in itself an ontological demarcation. As Cavell and Bazin illustrate, it liberates the artist to question what is real, or live: the essentiality of existence. Cavell pursues this line of enquiry as he identifies an obvious yet fundamental ontological state of film and photography in the fact what we see is *not* present. (1979: 17) There is certainly an irony here in the sense that these media (static and moving images) to which we attach the greatest verisimilitude are in fact the most absent from their materialisation. Bazin also proposes that film, particularly in its earliest forms, followed a parallel path to realism, one that was significantly rooted in montage and abstraction (for example in the work of Sergei Eisenstein) and found more affinity with literature than with theatre. Only with the advent of the 'talkies' and the centralisation of the industry in America, according to Bazin, did film homogenise more noticeably around the contextually qualifying trait of realism. (Cavell 1979)

In seeking comparisons between film and theatre Bazin offers lengthy reflections on what may now be considered the remediative and transmediative relationship with two key chapters (in the first volume) on *Theatre and Cinema* (1960). He refers to the genre of 'filmed theatre' which he says rarely succeeds as it tries to make concrete the symbolism of theatre. Ironically, for us looking back on his writings fifty years hence, he says this fashion continues because film has an inferiority complex

to theatre and seeks to ape it. Bazin identifies certain differences in the media as he suggests that film creates a state of mass identification whilst theatre creates opposition as the actors real presence on stage demands that we 'will' them into a fictional abstraction (2005: 99). Films, like novels, create an illusory intimacy in his view whilst theatre is based on a reciprocal awareness across the footlights. (102) This awareness creates a community within theatre as opposed to cinema that paradoxically operates on a personal level whilst generating a mass identification. Cinema significantly rejects the human being as locus of the action (105), both in interpretative and representational terms and denies, in virtual terms, any barrier to its scope. Interestingly for this study Bazin rejects Marcel Pagnol's prediction that cinema will replace theatre by 'canning it' (117) and he claims that film will revitalise theatre as we will come to recognise 'cinematographic theatre' (120) as a legitimate form of theatre in its own right, relocated into the filmic domain. I would here add an obvious counterpoint to this in an observation that film has found an overt residence in theatre and we now have a recognisable genre which may be referred to as 'theatricalised film' (a subset of cine-theatre in its overt and meticulous aping of a cinematic *mise en scène*) as seen in the 'filmic' stage-works of *Kneehigh Theatre* and *imitating the dog*. It is important to note that I am not merely identifying adaptations of film on stage with this analysis but the intentional process of moving cinematic ontology, its modalities and qualifying aspects, transmedially into a theatrical realm.

Bazin pays close attention to the subjects of presence and absence in film, which will be of particular pedagogical significance in the later case study chapters. He argues

under the heading *The Concept of Presence* that film has problematized the notion of presence which used to clearly refer to live 'flesh and blood' appearance. (2005: 409) With the advent of cinema however '... it is no longer as certain as it was that there is no middle stage between presence and absence.' (ibid) Resonating with Deleuze's conceptions of the filmic image as an imaging of time in motion (see next heading) he notes that: 'The cinema does something strangely paradoxical. It makes a molding (*sic*) of the object as it exists in time and, furthermore, makes an imprint of the duration of the object.' (ibid) Here Bazin has identified cinema's capacity to phenomenalise our temporal existence both as a series of infinite present moments but also as a continuous experience of interconnected moments given meaning by what has come before and what follows.

Throughout Stanley Cavell's writings on film, themes of absence and presence also prevail. He notes that in both theatre and film there is a shared sense of absence for the audience but distinctively it is the movies that '... allow the audience to be mechanically absent (...) invisible and inaudible to the actors' (1979: 20) whilst in the theatre audiences are merely conceptually absent from the stage action. We are in his view 'helpless' in the presence of a movie as we are present at a recording of what has happened, like a memory. In this sense, and as a precursor to the thoughts of Gay McCauley (1987), he compares filmic experience with the reading of a novel through which we narrate the past. Even live tele-visual presentation is not simply the world on view according to Cavell but 'an event standing out from the world' (ibid); immediately on view yet historical.

Robert E. Wood constructed a contemporary ontology of film in his 2001 article *Toward an Ontology of Film: A Phenomenological Approach* in which he proposes to reflect upon the filmic medium via 'a double method: a phenomenological inventory, and a comparison with other cognate art forms.' (2001) His comparative study focuses primarily on spatial and temporal aspects, creating resonances with Elleström's model, and he begins with consideration of the differences with a static image such as in painting. Whilst the static image is 'present all at once' film creates an 'active temporal context' moving beyond the two dimensional material surface. (ibid) He suggests that the camera guides us around the virtual three-dimensionality on screen, offering some similarity with the physical journey we can take around a sculptural piece. However he distinguishes a key temporal difference between the viewing of the plastic arts and film. He states that:

It is actually someone else's - the cameraman's, and ultimately the director's - viewing of the plastic work that we are enabled to experience through the film. One might say that the plastic arts leave us free to pace our own viewing, while film dominates our viewing by giving us a surrogate point of view. (ibid)

From this perspective the fixed temporal sequentiality of film may be clearly contrasted with the partially or non-fixed sequentiality of other live or three-dimensional media that, it could be argued, we have greater agency over. To an extent however I would propose that a significant proportion of theatre is a surrogate perspective, operating at a temporality predetermined by others.

Nonetheless I would also contest that we still have far more control in theatre over the viewing of the image in terms of taking in the whole stage perspective or focusing in on one element, a specific character or object for example. Antonia Baehr, the choreographer and film-maker, reflected on the camera-like transmedial gaze of the theatre spectator in an interview about her work for stage as opposed to that for camera:

The activity of the spectator's gaze (...) is similar to that of the director of photography in the process of making a film (...) someone is looking at the eyes, others at the feet, others still at the nose. People choose their close-ups differently. (2012: 243)

In conventional theatre others do not move us through the space and there can only be suggestions by the theatre director as to what is significant and worthy of our sensorial attention. However specific or indicative the 'instructions' are by performers or scenographic elements such as spotlights it is not as prescriptive as in film.

Although the audience may be 'helpless' to determine film-space or time as it initially manifests itself, both they and the filmmakers themselves do have, according to Wood, the capacity to transgress certain spatial and temporal boundaries in the creation and perception of film. The cutting and editing allow for past, present and future moments to collide and re-order themselves. The composition that materialises, for example, can 'juxtapose on the screen two spatially separated events.' (2001) Wood notes that this is also identifiable as a trait within theatre but

its potential is restricted due to spatial and temporal constraints. He suggests that film, more than any other medium, demands and activates our perception of a virtual world beyond the frame, perceiving spatial and temporal realms inferred to us.

Offering my own exemplar of this it can be easily identified in the cutting between two screen performers in conversation. In constructing our understanding of the scene we constantly perceive the absent 'other' who is off screen momentarily. The editing, cutting and selection of images as key components of filmic ontology oblige us to simultaneously 'see' the material image on screen *and* contextualise it within a wider frame either previously shown to us through the temporal control of the director/camera-person or alluded to by a variety of other integrated media, for example a musical score suggesting imminence of new events or media techniques such as panning and zooming. This precurses, and hence initiates construction of, a world beyond our current sensory scope. Cavell also denotes this symbiotic relationship between the world *within and the world without* the frame when he first identifies that: 'A painting is a world, a photograph is of the world.' (1979: 19) Then, in consideration of film specifically, he proposes that the screen creates a 'phenomenological frame that is indefinitely extendible and contractible, limited in the smallness of the object it can grasp only by the state of the technology, and in largeness only by the span of the world.' (1979: 20) This echoes Bazin's contention that film denies delimitation.

In phenomenological terms, Wood highlights the explicitness of film in its capacity to enact a visual world that is only ever imagined within the reading of a novel. Wood,

again reflecting the thoughts of Bazin, suggests that film emphasizes an 'increasing importance of the visual ambience' (2001) that can potentially delimit the connotative possibilities. Using a comparison between the approaches to nudity and sexuality in Kundera's novel (and subsequent film of) *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* he proposes that in the film: 'The power of visual immediacy tends to block rather than stimulate the reflective awareness intended and achieved by the novel.' (ibid) Implicated in this is the sense that the explicitness of film may still be a restrictive factor.

Turning now to Elleström's model of media construction it is possible to identify the specifics of the media as suggested by Bazin et al. but also its commonality of strata that are shared with related media.

In its *material* modality it is composed of a flat surface of changing images (light, including darkness and colour to cite Wood's description) and sound waves. The *sensorial* modality is dominated by the visual and auditory but, as Elleström reminds us, memory has a significant role to play in engaging sensory recollection. Film, it may be argued, is particularly effective at engaging this remembered sensorium through the 'visual ambience' to borrow Wood's term and the almost ever-present musical score which he suggests 'moods' the image. A western has the capacity to re-engage our sense of the sun-baked heat of a desert (thermoception) or a scene of torture on screen may viscerally stimulate our sense of pain (nociception) far more than any literary or theatrical sequence. In *spatio-temporal* terms film works initially through the two dimensions of height and width but depth is created in virtual terms as we contextualise the images before us against our own 'life-world'. It is also

materialised to an extent by the movement of the camera through space, offering an illusion at least that we are free from 'human immobility' as Dziga Vertov put it. It could be argued that we have momentary sensations of spatial agency within film, for instance when seeing the action through a protagonist's 'point of view' shot in which s/he may go left or right but this is a temporary illusion. The temporality for most films is more pragmatic than the spatialisation as it is predominantly rooted in fixed sequentiality as we are 'helpless' to the progress of time both in the interior narrative of the film and within its screening at the cinema. However, as noted earlier, these spatial and temporal factors still demand our imaginative engagement as we individually construct the domain of the film. The semiotic modality of film (focusing on icon, index and symbol) is complex due to the images and vocalisation being 'of the world' to cite Cavell and the symbiotic relationship between the moving images *and* the musical score which Wood identifies as a crucial and almost constant relationship within the history and ontology of film. The images are first and foremost iconic but may contain significant indexical qualities in their inference of space, objects and impending action. A close up (iconic) image of eyes looking left may index the arrival of another character in the virtual space of the screen and at the same time symbolise, through operationally qualified convention, tension and impending confrontation.

The *qualifying aspects* of film are particularly nuanced and significant as we are so familiar with the cultural discourse of the medium and are enculturated within societies that are infused with filmic traditions that we can both decode and transmediate into other aspects of our lives such as everyday conversation or

movement. However, in contextual terms it is important to note cinema's fluctuating position within western culture. As Ágnes Pethő identifies, film, whilst still remaining as a celebrated medium, is now being absorbed and mutated into more agile digital media such as the internet. (2010) Film-makers no longer necessarily control the technical medium through which their work is screened or alternatively they make films specifically for new media platforms; an example of a qualified medium immediately moving transmedially for its phenomenalization. Likewise, in operationally qualified terms, we may still recognise and agree upon the indicative features of film but as new techniques such as *CGI* or new modalities such as three-dimensionality become more ubiquitous the current ontology of film is always being challenged. In a sense the term *filmic* is testament to the unstable and mutable nature of film. Its ability to remediate and transmediate creates the need to recognize its potency across the medial landscape. Be that in the *filmic* portraits of Jack Vettriano, the *filmic* staging of Robert Lepage or the *filmic* dialogue of the playwright David Mamet, film is central to our enculturation. To cite Vertov once more it gives us a 'fresh perception of the world' (1994) as it informs how the world phenomenalises itself to us and how our 'body schema'²⁷ engages with it. Within the case study chapters, particularly **Can Dogs Speak French?** I will consider how this filmic perception potentially offers us new ways of realizing our agency and authorship within the world.

²⁷ See later analysis of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's 'body schema' in **Intermedial pedagogy: work in progress**.

Deleuze and the Imaging of Movement and Time

Many writers have sought to contemplate film as a philosophical paradigm. Recently Daniel Frampton, in his book *Filmosophy* (2006), contested that film was a thinking entity in itself and must not be reduced to a technicist perspective of shots and edits. He argued 'we should not be taught to see "zooms" and "tracking shots", but led to understand intensities and movements of feeling and thinking.' (2006: 169) Whilst it is important to recognise new contributions in this field it is also significant to note the debt overtly acknowledged by Frampton and others to the work of Gilles Deleuze who perhaps may be regarded as the most influential writer on the subject of film as philosophy. In his principle works on the subject, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image* written in 1983 and *Cinema 2: The Time Image* written in 1985 (which both drew upon the writings of Henri Bergson), he proposed a radical reappraisal of what an image could be conceived of and persuasively argued that throughout our lived experience we were all making cinema as we sliced life into edited moments.

Deleuze proposed in *Cinema 1: The Movement Image* that the world and indeed the universe were constantly in motion. Even objects that appeared static such as a table or a book were, at a quantum level, in permanent flux. Therefore, at any moment in time, we are perceiving an image of what is in front of us: the image of movement for example. Deleuze uses the term *image* in a variety of contexts but overall it may be regarded as a snap shot of the world around us, and this may be visual or sensorial in other forms such as taste or touch. Deleuze succinctly formulates this as: '*IMAGE = MOVEMENT*' (2005: 58) and then amplifies this by referring to image as 'flowing matter'. (2005: 59) So each perception of the world is a 'slice', which

depending on how you perceive it reveals a different aspect of life. Professor Christopher Vitale, in his respected blog on Deleuze, underlines the significance of this perspective:

And here we start to see the sheer power of Deleuze's concept of cinema. Any time the universe is sliced, we are imaging, and hence, doing cinema. When I grab a handful of dirt from the ground, by separating out a handful from the rest of the Earth, I am framing that handful, cutting it from the background, and hence, imaging. For each aspect of the world is a reflection-refraction of all the rest, for all is ultimately interconnected. (2011)

In this sense we make cinema as we exist, editing shots as move through space, considering a close up of our hand perhaps then on to a long shot out through the window. Our eyes and wider sensorial faculties frame the world.

The concept of the *movement-image* is broken down into a variety of types: the *perception-image*, the *action-image*, and the *affection-image*. (2005: 61 – 70) These images relate respectively, to the perception of sight, the interaction between characters and their positions, and to emotional experience. A constructed image that is consciously framed may be referred to as a *perception-image*. The perception-image is embodied in cinema, an example of subjective perception that frames reality and separates from the objective image of the thing (which is the thing itself). All our images, in this sense, are perception-images as we cannot escape our own perception, even when offered the world through the eyes of another such

as in cinema. However, some are more consciously framed than others and the arts and visual media have a specific capacity to place you within the viewpoint of an 'other'. The action-image is the 'material aspect of subjectivity' (65) and relates to the actions of subjects. The affection-image locates itself between the first two images, and is the mode in which the subject 'experiences itself from the inside'. (65) Deleuze uses the example of *Film* (1965) by Samuel Beckett and starring Buster Keaton as within this film the camera creates point of view moments and Keaton's double of himself whereby he experiences a 'perception of self by self.' (67)

In *Cinema 2: The Time Image*, Deleuze seeks to reconsider time and distinguish chronological linear time, which he perceives as spatial, with a more nuanced perceptual sense of time. Drawing on Bergson he proposed that lived time was more dynamic and unpredictable as it feeds upon and is measured by memories, feelings and desires. Time seems to stretch when we are bored, contract when under pressure, and stand still when we daydream and so forth. The image, as a slice or representation of time, therefore envelopes not just a single moment but is an enfolding cycle of past, present and future: a *time-image* that is infused with time. Paola Marrati summates Deleuze's position on this when she writes:

Not only is the image never in the present, but it always has a temporal density: it is possessed by a past and a future that haunt it and that in no way coincide with the actual images that precede and follow it. The image thus has a "before" and an "after" that coexist with its present. It is a truly Proustian cinema, in which beings occupy a place in time that

is incommensurable with the place they hold in space. If this is the case, it is because time cannot be reduced to its chronological dimension, in which one instant follows another. (2008: 68)

Deleuze goes on to categorise time images as *recognition*, *recollection* and *dream*. These reflect differing levels of divergence from the present moment in order for us to fully engage with the image. Recognition may require a fleeting introspection into our memory or knowledge of future intentions whilst recollection may demand a lengthier or more concerted immersion in memory or desire. A dream time-image may take us completely away from the present moment so that our occupation of space and our occupation of time are disconnected. Every engagement with an image is a dialogue between actual (present) and virtual (past/future) time. For Deleuze virtual time could be equated with freedom as Vitale writes: 'The virtual past/future infused into the actual is what produces freedom from being enslaved to the moment.' (2011) Cinema, in Deleuze's view, had the capacity to explore and phenomenalise these images of time with dream sequences, flashbacks / flash forwards, doublings on screen and so forth. He also proposed what he referred to as the *crystal-image*, which is the occurrence in film where the actual and the virtual are fused. Citing Orson Welles's film *Lady from Shanghai* (1947) he gives the example of the scene in the hall of mirrors where the character and their distorted mirror images combine to connote their emotional dysfunctionality and murderous intent. (2007: 92) The actual characters become absorbed amongst the multiple

refractions to the point where they are 'virtualised' and the line between actual and virtual is indiscernible.

Within Deleuze's writings there are some clear resonances with phenomenology that are to be explored more fully later in this study but worthy of brief mention at this stage. He considers, for example, our situated experience, which is emphasised by phenomenology, and he frames this as a cinematic viewpoint. Likewise his consideration of time as an infusion of past, present and future is comparable with that of Heidegger's. However it is also important to point out that Deleuze himself sought to distinguish his own theories from that of Merleau-Ponty and others and is critical of phenomenology at times. In his own writings he identifies flaws or omissions in phenomenology's approach to cinema. He writes: 'As for Husserl, as far as we know, he never mentions the cinema at all (...) It is Merleau – Ponty who attempts, only incidentally, a confrontation between cinema and phenomenology, but he also sees the cinema as an ambiguous ally.' (2005: 57) He argues that phenomenology's emphasis on 'natural perception' anchored and situated in the world negates or fails to resolve film's capacity to dislodge us from this fixed point. He writes:

The cinema can, with impunity, bring us close to things or take us away from them and revolve around them, it suppresses both the anchoring of the subject and the horizon of the world. Hence it substitutes an implicit knowledge and a second intentionality for the conditions of natural perception. It is not the same as the other arts, which aim

rather at something unreal through the world, but makes the world itself something unreal or a tale (*récit*). (2005: 57)

However within an intermedial model of performance this alterity of film is profitable rather than problematic as it situates this 'second intentionality' or alternative perception within the same space as the live bodies of the performers, creating a simultaneity of experience *within* and *without*. Therefore, as will be explored in **Can Dogs Speak French?**, there is an opportunity to interweave Deleuze and phenomenology within an intermedial pedagogy. In addition to these connections there is also an affinity to be found between Deleuze's notion of the *crystal-image* (actual/virtual fusion) and Isabella Pluta's intermedial conception of the 'mediaphoric body' (actor/mediatised image/metaphor fusion) (2010: 191) that will be explored within **Butterflies**.

5. Theatre as hypermedium: the aesthetic and performative challenges

This chapter focuses on theatre's unique position as a hypermedium, with its capacity to envelop a seemingly endless profusion of modalities and media within its boundaries. This quality of theatre offers both opportunity and tension for contemporary artists and those engaged in the study of intermediality. This 'hospitality' of theatre with its open invitation to other qualified and technical media creates a dynamic yet crowded environment in which there is an expectation of transmedial knowledge on the part of the participants and creators alongside a challenge to the authorial agency historically given to writers, directors and actors.

In light of the assertions made in the previous chapter, perhaps the initial statement to lead us into a chapter on theatre as a hypermedium is to re-emphasise the dialogic relationship between all media, accepting their distinctiveness and *also* their mutability. Kattenbelt, prescient of Elleström's later perspective, was succinct in his opinion on this when he stated: 'Personally, I do not speak any longer about arts *and* media, as in, for example, theatre *and* media, but only as media.' (2008: 21) In embracing this argument we are then alert to the occurrence of other media within theatre and, conversely, theatre's occurrence within other media. Kattenbelt however ascribes theatre with particularly unique intermedial qualities. He perceives the medium has demonstrable significance in its capacity to embrace all other media in three-dimensional space:

Maybe we could even say: when two or more different art forms come together a process of theatricalization occurs. This is not only because theatre is able to incorporate all other art forms, but also because theatre is the «art of the performer» and so constitutes the basic pattern of all the arts. (Kattenbelt 2008: 20)

This notion of theatre as a medium capable of incorporating all others was initially elucidated in Chapple and Kattenbelt's seminal collection of essays *Intermediality in Theatre and Performance* (2006). In the introduction chapter they state that '...theatre has become a hypermedium and home to all' (24), within which all media can be sited and remediated to create 'profusions of texts, inter-texts, inter-media and space in between.' (ibid) In this sense, theatre is able to acknowledge all acts of representation within its borders (often simultaneously) and make us conscious of their mediating effect. (Bolter and Grusin 1999) In Bolter and Grusin's analysis they identify the 'double logic' or 'two logics' of remediation: 'transparent immediacy and hypermediacy' (1999: 70) in which context the term hypermediacy must be noted as related but distinguishable from hypermedium. Both these states of 'transparent immediacy and hypermediacy' have potential implications for a theatre maker utilising filmic technology within the live environment and indeed for educators and students seeking, for example, to reflect upon or define what may be deemed a portrayal of role in a live performance. Kattenbelt summates their 'double logic' perspective as follows:

The first logic aims at making the user forget the medium, whereas the second logic aims at making the user aware of the medium. Both logics are inextricably linked to each other and in the end they aim at the same thing, which is to exceed the restrictions of representation in order to intensify the experience of the real. (Kattenbelt 2008: 25 citing Bolter & Grusin 1999: 53)

It may be proposed therefore that the physical hypermedium of theatre creates the conditions for both transparent immediacy and hypermediacy to occur.

Both 'logics' are familiar to a 20th century theatrical tradition that has embraced both Stanislavskian realism and Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt*, but it is a duality which is being perpetually explored and redefined by contemporary, technology driven practitioners. Lepage or *imitating the dog*, through their emphasis on Méliès-esque illusion, experiment with the transparent immediacy that film and television can evoke, whilst *Lightwork* along with others such as *The Wooster Group* seek to exploit the hypermediacy of the event through the placement of technology (cameras, cables, screens, copies of texts and so on) front and centre of the spectatorial experience. In the instance of *Lightwork's The Good Actor or the Wooster Group's Hamlet* (2007) the audience is simultaneously faced with the mechanistic, unreality of the event in which the façade and the notion of theatrical repetition are exposed, alongside the seductive 'reality' that such exposure suggests. We feel we are seeing some 'truth' within the act of revelation. It prompts a reappraisal of what is being perceived and what is being embodied and how this

should be considered both within the devising process and performance itself. Phenomenalising the superficiality of theatre's modalities prompts a re-examination of what role embodiment is and how meaning is constructed by an audience who are now invited to become conscious of their own spectatorial act. Contemporary genres such as surveillance theatre, which will be analysed further in **Bells and Meteorites**, have exploited this attention on the gaze of the audience to explore what it is to witness theatre and to question who has agency within the act of performance. Hypermediality certainly demands a co-construction of meaning between performer (or actualiser of the event which may be a technologist) and the spectator, as the fictional space no longer presents a heuristic 'truth'. Likewise, roles may be deconstructed, not only in postdramatic²⁸, non representational terms but scattered temporally and spatially across media so that a live performer must cede the control of the character's embodiment to multiple platforms.

It is arguable that only theatre has the capacity to embrace other artistic forms without fundamentally altering their structure; what may be deemed initially as multimedial (Kattenbelt 2006). Film and television, to take the media pertinent to this study, can be incorporated into theatre by means of projection surfaces whilst to place theatre into a film context requires a fundamental structural remediation of the form so that physical, three dimensional embodiment and live performativity (with the potential for adaptation) are sacrificed within the remediation process. Boenisch describes theatre as a 'fully transparent medium' (2006: 112) with the ability to leave its incorporated media free of 'any palpable fingerprints of its

²⁸ Hans Thies Lehmann's conception of 'postdramatic' theatre is analysed further in **Bells and Meteorites**.

mediatisation' (ibid) unlike television or film. He exemplifies this by stating '... a video might be projected as part of a theatre performance, which is then recorded for TV; yet the video on stage is still a video, whereas on the television it will be the broadcast of the showing of a video.' (ibid) Chiel Kattenbelt further elucidates this point when he proposes that film, television, video and DVD (when they appear in a theatre setting) become staged and 'in this capacity, not only cinematic, televisual, videographic or digital, but at the same time theatrical.' (2008: 22 – 23)

The accessibility of theatre's hypermediacy creates opportunities and challenges for theatre-makers and performers as we are constantly able to look beyond intramedial options and on to transmedial languages for inspiration and actual practical application in the live environment. This plethora of opportunities, particularly the access to technologically based media such as film and television, creates both reward and risk. A rich seam of new meanings may be found in the intersections of media but the inclusion of pre-made or pre-recorded work from multiple sources risks obfuscating the authorial voice and destabilising the agency of the performer, as will be considered in all the case studies. The ever shifting knowledge base and old alliances to a western tradition of theatre are potentially of limited use when constructing such contemporary work as that of Robert Lepage which absorbs filmic, operatic and circus aesthetics and practices alongside those of the theatre.

Lepage, in an interview with Richard Eyre stated: "I've never really been interested in theatre as such. In my adolescence I was more interested in theatricality." (Lepage 1997 in Dundjerović 2007: 2) He goes on to say that his generation of theatre makers

were influenced more by “rock shows, dance shows and performance art” (ibid) rather than theatre per se. For me, this conception of ‘theatricality’ creates the receptive atmosphere for other *qualified media* to transgress into the theatre space as it acknowledges the unique quality of the medium, its hypermediacy rather than its exclusivity. To return to the issue of tensions however, it reinforces the difficulty facing practitioners as they attempt to keep abreast of the ‘theatrical’ knowledges and skills that they may employ. Theatrical knowledge from this perspective inherently becomes transmedial and transmodal, demanding performance makers and audiences to be aware of and receptive to a vast range of influences from across the arts. Allied to this it is worth considering that the hypermedial receptivity of theatre, whilst making media combination more accessible, may deceive artists and educators. Rather than creating work that is intermedial (with real ‘mutual affect’) what we are actually left with is adjacent media; separate ‘fingerprints’ as Peter Boenisch would put it that do not suggest a coherent new identity.

The multiplicity and pace of the discourse almost defy quantification into training or teaching methodologies and within this the function or the experience for the performer has not necessarily been reflected upon. Ralf Remshardt, drawing on N. Katherine Hayles theories of the *posthuman*²⁹ in theatre (1999), conveys this concern when he writes:

Developments in distributed performance, immersive virtual reality environments, televisual presence (...) and so forth are proceeding now with such rapidity in the practices of a

²⁹ See **Bells and Meteorites** for further analysis of ‘posthumanism’ in performance.

significant number of performers and content creators that they outrun most efforts to map, chart, describe, systematize, and interpret them. (...) In the intermedial discourse, while we increasingly understand how media redefine *each other*, we poorly understand how they redefine the performer and performance itself. (Remshardt 2008: 48-50)

So what we may identify as a contemporary challenge is the centrality of the performer when they are subsumed into an environment that may be infiltrated with live but also filmic or tele-present personae and the potential requirement to shift between these performance realms or to be simultaneously *within and without* their own corporeality, such as when they are performing against their own 'digital double' (Dixon 2007a). Twenty-five years ago Gay McAuley identified the contrast of status between the film and theatre actor when she wrote:

The actor is (...) not central to the communication process in the cinema. The film actor is one element among many. Indeed actors as such are not even necessary. (...) It is essentially the cutting and ordering that leads the spectator to construct meanings. The work of the actor, far from being the central communicating force that it is in the theatre, is simply one of the things the camera records, relates (in both senses of the word), and comments upon. (1987)

This continues to raise more problematic questions regarding the role of the performer in the hypermedial environment. When there is a fluid line between the live and the digitally mediated what is the function of the actor/s within that space? What mediating status or agency do they have, particularly if a significant proportion of their role is filmic?

It is undoubtedly the case that theatre is moving towards a filmic aesthetic both in its overt use of cinematic media but also in its underlying modalities, particularly *spatio – temporal* and *semiotic* as we become evermore literate with and expectant of perceiving live work in televisual or filmic terms. To a large extent we are acclimatised to representations in the live arena that are both technologically and ontologically constructed in digital, film space. By this I mean we are accustomed to visual and acoustic elements that have been digitally mediated (large screens relaying live action at a concert for example) and we are also able to distinguish and interpret the *contextual qualifying aspects* of film when utilised in live performance. An awareness of this enculturated transmedial literacy potentially offers a profitable response to the anxieties created by hypermediality and the expansive knowledge required. Whilst there is still an undoubted need to have a broad contextual vocabulary in modern theatre, the culturally embedded and embodied noesis should be embraced. In this regard it is apt to perceive of ourselves as a complex site of mediation; a hypermedium in its own right³⁰ that can accommodate a vast range of medial knowledge's and actions (voice, movement, telecommunications, digital images and films and so on) and deftly remediate or transmediate these knowledges

³⁰ In the later sub-section: **Enculturated Intermediality** I subsume this notion of body as *hypermedium* within the conception of the body as an overarching corporeal *intermedium*.

and actions into new intermedia. The syntax of texts and tweets is assimilated into linguistic patterns, the camera angles and slow motion edits of film re-made as corporeal physicalisations in everyday life.³¹ In beginning to consider this experience from a phenomenological perspective, drawing upon the work of Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, it is important to note the whole body's experience and assimilation of these medial influences. They are not merely cognitive processes but interactions with the whole sensorium and hence the body re-stages media not just in conceptual or linguistic terms but in embodied forms as well.

The transmedial literacy of artists and audience allows the performance techniques of cinema to become ubiquitous in theatre, as can be seen in the early cine-theatrical work of *Stan's Café* entitled *It's Your Film* (1999) to the jump cut inspired *Loopdiver* by *Troika Ranch* (2007) and the overt cine-theatrical acting in *Kneehigh's Brief Encounter* (2008). So perhaps it may be observed that, whilst theatre may be recognised as a hypermedium, the underlying modal structure is shifting, in part, towards other media and I would personally contest that the 'fingerprints' of other media are revealing themselves to an ever-greater extent so that intermediality is arguably the overt *modus operandi* in much of today's theatre. Whilst theatre can undoubtedly absorb other media and theatricalize them, it is clear that the live performer is becoming, to varying degrees, cinematic, televisual, and indeed intermedial in embodied, spatial and temporal terms. The prevalence of this contemporary professional practice and its correlated pedagogical implications are central foci for all three case studies.

³¹ Consider, for example, the slow motion fight sequences recreated by children during play that ape film or video game aesthetics.

6. Intermedial pedagogy: a work in progress

The mediating qualities of theatre, as they have been expressed so far, potentially pre-empt any debate on the subject of intermedial pedagogy. By its very nature, before the inclusion of any digital technology such as film, theatre has been envisaged, at least by some, as an intermedial and hypermedial domain. Perhaps then, as educators within universities, we have already had to evolve an intermedial pedagogy consciously or otherwise in order to accommodate the forms that inhabit a theatrical space. However, whilst this may be an approximate articulation of the historical, even perhaps the current situation and hence worth bearing in mind when considering future methodologies, it is not enough in my view to merely note the organic development of pedagogy or indeed assume there has been significant development.

My contention is that university practice that seeks to deterritorialise subject or disciplinary boundaries in the arts has been restricted for many years by essentialist desires to circumscribe fields of practice due to artistic but also educationally pragmatic rationales. Christopher Balme, writing about the 20th century preoccupation with media specificity, reflects that:

Most of us were raised and trained in the paradigm of media specificity. (...) Attempts to define art forms in terms of specific, incontestable medial characteristics is symptomatic of high modernist aesthetics and is rooted in its fundamental

move towards form at the expense of content, or towards the medium, not the message. (2008: 82)

As noted earlier, practitioners such as Brook and Grotowski sought to resist the infiltration of technology into theatre in a pursuit of the essential, constituent parts of performance which Grotowski believed could be reduced down to the binary of actor and audience. (1986: 15) Ironically, when the first UK drama department began at Bristol University in 1947, its founder Glynne Wickham determinedly resisted the siloing of the subject. Roy Connolly writes that: 'One of the most striking things when reading Wickham on these terms is his absolute rejection of commodifying drama and his commitment to establishing a forum for the exploration of disciplinary boundaries and the problems in subject knowledge.' (2013: 233) However, arguably for the valid reason of fighting for subject distinctiveness in the face of academic scepticism, drama and theatre studies became, and still remain to an extent, delineated and detached from potentially profitable interrelationships with other fields of practice. Christopher Balme writes that resistance, specifically to technological developments in performance, comprises 'remarkably large sections of mainstream theatre and – I would argue – theatre studies as well.' (2008: 80)

The intermedial journey of theatre into a digitally immersed future, encompassing posthuman (Hayles 1999) and postdramatic (Lehmann 2006) domains demands, however, a conscious appraisal of how pedagogy should or could respond. This chapter seeks to document current reflection on the subject and identify educational paradigms that may be of productive value. The first half of the chapter therefore focuses on the most recent literature specifically written on the subject of

intermedial pedagogy whilst the latter half considers the wider pedagogical and philosophical frames of reference that will be applied to the case study analysis.

To begin with I do not think it is contentious to argue that at this point in time there is a limited coherent discourse on the pedagogy of intermediality. There is, I will identify, a heterogeneous set of forays into pedagogical reflection in this arena that are not concerted or connected in any form that could be considered as a robust field of enquiry. This tentative state can be evidenced in the findings of a *Palatine* conference held at Sheffield University in 2007 entitled *Intermediality: Performance and Pedagogy*. The stated theme of the event was ‘...the emergent field of Intermediality and its relationship to performance practice, pedagogy and research in an increasingly digital world.’ (Nelson 2007) The most resonant comments from my perspective came from Professor Robin Nelson himself who reflected that:

... to develop a bounded field, I think we need further to clarify what 'intermediality' might embrace. The range of pedagogies involved is likely to remain varied but, in order for some issues and challenges to be dialogically negotiated, I think we need more tightly to define the field. (ibid)

However, the disparate range of research findings do seem to highlight the recurring themes of perceptual immersion contrasted with critical distance and so it is worth considering the contrasts and correlations between these *within and without* positions wherever possible, both in this chapter and the analyses that follow. It is

also important to identify certain fundamental issues that are presently absent from the debate.

An apt point of departure, for a critique of intermedial pedagogy embracing live and digital practices in performance, may be arrived at by revisiting Walter Benjamin's challenge to 'auratic art' (1936) and the identification of democratised means of art production as considered in the **Prologue**. This re-conception of the art object and concurrent anxieties over the implications of such auratic deconstruction can be seen as a pre-cursor for many of the drama educational debates throughout the 20th century and into the early years of this century. Certain drama educational theorists have sought to embrace the potentiality of technology whilst others have raised concerns over its de-personalisation of an artistic **medium in which the uniqueness** is arguably, as Peggy Phelan would suggest, to be found in the inter-personal, live environment.

The relationship between drama and technology, distinct from its intermedial relationship, has been reflected upon at length by educational theorists. Particularly significant in this field have been the writings of John Carroll, Michael Anderson and David Cameron. In *real players? drama, technology and education* (2006) they consider the impetus for drama teachers at all levels to embrace technology within the classroom as 'students are less familiar with traditional theatre as they are immersed in mediatised drama forms.' (44) They reference the work of certain intermedial companies such as *Blast Theory* but the text overall is more focused on the utilisation of technology as a tool within drama or the remediation of drama into other media such as film rather than a consideration of the intermedial potential.

This is also the case for their 2009 publication *Drama Education with Digital Technology* although their chapter on the relationship between drama and film and the differing teaching challenges this presents offers some constructive insight into the implications for intermedial teaching and hence will be referenced in later chapters. Within both texts and in many online forums (for example *dramatechspace.com*) significant attention is paid to the posthuman trajectories of drama into virtual realms such as gaming and *Second Life*. Whilst the potentiality of this is of importance it is arguably mono-medial in its focus and does not represent a clear foray into intermedial territory.

In recent years, and more directly related to intermediality, such writers as Amy Petersen Jensen have advocated emancipatory pedagogies built upon 'multimodal literacies' that have 'emerged from our collective reliance on and devotion to new communication technologies.' (2008: 19) She has suggested that:

...theater (*sic*) educators should ask themselves how they might use theater tools and methods to increase students' critical awareness of the media that surrounds them. Theater teachers can plan for overt instruction that focuses the student learner's attention on the pervasive media in ways that allow for the meta-awareness of and reflection on patterns and relationships among the students' bodies, contemporary modes of entertainment, and mediums that convey those modes. (2008: 24)

Jensen identifies the key theme of ‘meta-awareness’ that is repeated in various guises throughout recent discourses³² in terms of technology’s capacity (in conjunction and juxtaposition with other media) to create a critical distance upon the mediated culture that surrounds us. In one of the few overt references to a distinct intermedial pedagogy this potential is addressed by Asunción López-Varela Azcárate and Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek in their 2008 article *Towards Intermediality in Contemporary Cultural Practices and Education* in which they envisage the study of intermediality as a mirror both on to media themselves but also wider socio-political concerns. They write:

We would like to emphasize the potential of intermediality to serve as a model that not only increases our understanding of the mechanisms of media convergence, but also applies to parallel phenomena in intercultural and educational contexts. We propose that the basis for a constructive conceptualisation of social change is mediated through technology and that the application and practice of intermediality as a vehicle for socio- cultural needs to be further explored, both theoretical and practically, in its aspects of production, distribution, and usability. (2008: 77)

Whilst such a breadth of study and argument is to be acknowledged it also has to be noted that there is no specific reference to theatrical performance in their work as

³² For example, see GEE, J.P. (2000) New people in new worlds: Networks, the new capitalism and schools. In: COPE, B. and KALANTZIS, M. (eds.) *Multiliteracies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures*. London: Routledge. pp. 43–68.

they define intermediality in the widest possible terms as ‘the ability to read and write critically across varied symbol systems and across various disciplines and scholarly as well as general discursive practices.’ (2008: 66-67) With a focus on linguistic strategies and the internet it does not specifically identify, for theatre or intermedial pedagogues, a usable framework for future analyses.

Similar themes to Azcárate and de Zepetnek however are to be found in the notion of *spectacle pedagogy* as outlined in the work of Charles R. Garoian and Yvonne M. Gaudelius (2008) which *is* constructed upon artistic and performative paradigms. Although there is no direct reference to intermediality their pedagogy undoubtedly embraces mixed media practice as it seeks to ‘make a case for the broadening of art and visual culture education to include critiques and art making related to the mass-mediated spectacle of visual culture.’ (Beudert 2008: 1) They envisage their pedagogy as ‘a democratic form of practice that enables a critical examination of visual cultural codes and ideologies to resist social injustice.’ (Garoian and Gaudelius 2008: 24) On reading their conceptualisation further, certain resonances can be found with the intermedial theorisations of Kattenbelt, Rajewsky and others. In considering the cross medial potential of pedagogy they address the interstices that intermediality (as a research domain) has reflected upon in recent years. It is interesting to note the use of ‘in between spaces’ as a reference in their rationale, which echoes the writings of Chapple and Kattenbelt in the same period. They write: ‘The potential of collage, montage, assemblage, installation, and performance art as critical pedagogy for visual culture in art education lies in their dissonant spaces, at the contested borders that exist between their dissociative remnants.’ (2008: 37)

Referring to the work of media educator Elizabeth Ellsworth, they contest that these dissonant spaces, or 'in-between spaces' are 'conceptually and emotionally charged' so they become sites where 'meaning is continually negotiated and teaching as a position of absolute authority is rendered impossible.' (ibid)

However, such enthusiasm for modern digital media within the educational theatre space is countered by writers such as Juliana Saxton who, whilst noting the significant influence of modern media, expresses doubts over technology's ability to replace or replicate interpersonal communication and empathy.

I do not think that that face-to face experience can be replicated in a virtual world. But I do think that it is possible that our fascination with the new media will change how our brains are wired and that, with those changes, our mirror neurons will be reconfigured through the exposure to second-order experience in ways that will dull our empathic responses. That, of course, may indeed be the art of technology, preparing us already for a future in which empathy will be a luxury we cannot afford as we fight each other for breath, space and life itself. (2010: 231-232)

As already identified, specific reference to an intermedial pedagogy has only been made by a select number of writers and even fewer have considered theatrical intermediality in educational terms. The most notable contribution is arguably to be found In *Mapping Intermediality in Performance* (2010) in which there is a chapter

entitled *Portal: Pedagogic Praxis* which the editors suggest 'gives access to fresh thinking about modes of study and fresh approaches to acting where new circumstances require new technology.' (Bay Cheng et al. 2010: 11) In the first of two sections in this *portal* Liesabeth Groot Nibbelink and Sigrid Merx consider 'Presence and Perception'. Their analyses is significant as it echoes the themes of critical reflection and meta-awareness as considered by Jensen and others whilst offering equal consideration to the embodied experience of the performer and the immersive experience of the audience. They identify the 'resensibilisation of the senses' (2010: 218) as a fundamental process in the experience and perception of intermedial work. In considering the viewers perspective they suggest that:

... intermedial performance often plays with or even explicitly deconstructs perceptual expectations and produces sensations ranging from subtle experiences of surprise or confusion, to more uncanny experiences of dislocation, displacement or alienation. The clash between digitally influenced perceptions and embodied presence manifests itself particularly as a disturbance of the senses and results in a blurring of realities. (219)

They perceive the experience of such work as an embodied process (citing Merleau-Ponty's notion that to perceive is to make oneself present: 1945, 2002) and that such a process requires constant 'negotiating and shifting between different and conflicting medial realities, moving in and out of perceptual worlds, relating different

impressions and signs, looking for a point of connection that might integrate the confusing and disturbing sensations in a meaningful whole, however unstable and ephemeral this whole may be.’ (220) The effect and affect upon the body are central to their conceptualisation as they point to the highly mediated nature of both the intermedial performer (as in the ‘mediaphoric body’ envisaged by Pluta 2010) and the audience. The performer may be connected with overt technical media such as projection screens or computer generated sound but also infused with transmedial references invoked through specific spatio – temporal or semiotic modalities as they may, for example, perform ‘cinematically’ within a theatrical space. Likewise the audience may find themselves literally embodying intermediality as they are ‘armed with I-pods, mobile phones or video goggles.’ (221)

The hypermedial nature of theatre is recognised by the two authors as a fundamental state on which a pedagogical frame may be constructed as it is able to represent all other media within its compass whilst creating a creative ‘dislocation’ between these media: ‘Media therefore become visible as media, as means of communication, each with their own materialities, medialities and conventions of perception.’ (225) In the light of this visibility and the critical discourse it enables, they propose that intermediality has a radical, educative potential. Resonating with Azcárate and de Zepetnek as well as Garoian and Gaudelius they contest that intermediality offers a reappraisal of power relations (citing Rancière’s *The Politics of Aesthetics* 2004):

The fact that our reality is constantly mediated has become
invisible. Producing colliding sensual impressions in

performance can mobilize a process of knowing by making these acts of mediation once again perceptible. Intermediality invites a new perception and realignment of the body; one perceives what was not seen before, or one remembers what was forgotten or had been taken for granted. This is a politics of perception that can be qualified as radical, implying a thorough commitment to, and involvement in, the world we inhabit. (227)

In the final part of their section the authors consider the subject of intimacy, referencing Blast Theory's *Rider Spoke* 2007, and in doing so offer a strong counter argument to concerns over technology's dehumanising qualities. Although performers and audience are separated during the event there is still an identifiable sensation of shared virtual space. 'To share secrets with one another, in spite of not being present in the same room and not sharing the same timeframe, is an experience of intimacy.' (227) For me, intimacy and sensuality are not exclusively live, inter – corporeal experiences and should be seen as fundamental qualities of intermediality.

The final section of the *portal*, written by Henk Havens, is an apt place to conclude this initial reflection on intermedial pedagogy as it concentrates on the university sector's response to intermedial practice and its current status within drama and performing arts departments. Within his case study on the Maastricht Theatre Academy (MTA) in The Netherlands he pertinently identifies how societal and media

changes are pushing curricula transitions and embedding new technologies in the programmes. (232-233) I would note at this point that such curricula transitions are to be observed in university drama and performing arts programmes across the United Kingdom as well as mainland Europe, the USA and Australia. As well as recently established intermedial research centres such as *The Centre for Intermediality in Performance* at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (led by Professor Robin Nelson); undergraduate degrees are also exploring this field. Besides the Performing Arts degree at DMU (on which I teach) with its intermedial foci, there are many examples across the world from the Film and Video in Performance Module at the University of Glasgow led by Greg Gieseckam to the Electronic Arts: Visual Theatre program at the University of South Australia, overseen by Russell Fewster. Such practice is becoming evermore prevalent as student demand, technological advancement and developing theorisation are enabling both learners and teachers. This development has been reflected in selective journal publications including the recent special issue of *IJPADM*³³ focusing on pedagogy and mixed-media performance. It is worthy of note however that in the UK neither *Palatine*, nor its more recent incarnation within the *Higher Education Authority* (Dance, Drama and Music), have produced any concerted body of material on intermediality or the impact of technology within performance pedagogy. There are certain articles published by these organisations related to using technology to enhance learning, for example the integration of motion capture to aid assessment

³³ *IJPADM: International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media*. Vol. 8 No. 2 – Special Issue: Pedagogy and Mixed-Media Performance. The issue included articles by Rosemary Klich, Mary Oliver and myself.

and actor reflection (Tunstall 2012) and an exploration of teaching postdramatic theatre (Wilson and Manchester 2012) yet intermediality is noticeably absent.

Henk Havens recognises that progress towards an interdisciplinary or intermedial future creates tensions for established university departments that have traditions built upon literary cultures and canonical work. This observation, I would suggest, is applicable across the UK university sector as intermediality disturbs subject boundaries and historical, cultural delimitations; causing re-evaluations of media currencies that are not always welcome within academia. Yet I would concur with Havens when he insists that:

Theatre academies do have to prepare for a near future with a rich performative spectrum, dynamic, growing, and without rigid values. They will have to deal with an international 'performers Dia-spora'. It is inescapable that future performance specialists will be less guided by gated communities of literary dramatic traditions of language and nation bound theatre cultures. (2010: 236)

To summate the current state of pedagogy in this field it may be said that there is a growing awareness of its significance and the impetus required to respond to the ubiquity of intermediality. As can be seen from the sections in *Mapping Intermediality in Performance* (2010), the role of pedagogy is being recognised but neither Nibbelink and Merx nor Havens offer a comprehensive paradigm. Attention by other writers is often focused on the potentiality of using technology within

drama or the emancipatory nature of revealing the socio-political discourse hidden within media. There are times when the terminology and strategy of the pedagogues and the intermedial theorists correlate but this is by chance rather than design. Lines are starting to be drawn between points on the map but it is still tentative. It is with this impulsion that I seek to analyse and evaluate my own observations on intermedial pedagogy as a field of enquiry that is not fully 'mapped', yet unquestionably part of the landscape.

Intermedial pedagogy: theoretical perspectives

Stepping back from the specifics of intermedial pedagogical inquiry as it manifests itself at present, it is important to consider the wider frame of theorisation upon which many of the recent debates are constructed and the new frameworks that I will seek to establish. In this final section of the chapter I consider the significance of three interrelated paradigms: ***constructivism***, ***phenomenology*** and firstly my proposition of ***enculturated intermediality***.

Throughout the analyses so far there has been a constant referencing of the constructed nature of intermediality and its capacity, through the concept of a hypermedium, to make overt the media discourses and multiple perspectives at work within any single performance event. From my perspective this construction needs contextualising in terms of our own lived experience of media. Hence I begin with the conception that I refer to as enculturated intermediality, as I propose that

this contemporary state of being is fundamental in understanding how we may profitably engage with learners who inhabit and have assimilated a media rich environment within their lives. With this in mind it is then appropriate to recognise the potential correlations with constructivist paradigms of learning and foreground their significance in the case study chapters that follow. Phenomenology, in its study of the world as we experience it, offers itself as a significant paradigm through which to critique the pedagogical implications of intermediality and in recent years several theorists have considered the relationship between its key theoretical principles and those of constructivism, such as in the work of Bjørn Rasmussen who will be referenced in this section.

Enculturated intermediality

He came the following Sunday afternoon. I had a television set. We played one ballgame on the TV, another on the radio, and kept switching to a third and kept track of all that was happening every moment. (Kerouac 1998: 238)

Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty from Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* may be seen as erstwhile everyday intermedialists as they encapsulate a cultural condition, which we, and particularly young people embody in our daily lives. I am proposing *enculturated intermediality* as a state of being, and not merely a conscious act of the mind but of the whole body, embedded in the non-mental Heideggerian *Dasein* and

the 'body schema' as envisaged by Merleau-Ponty. It was Merleau-Ponty himself who stated that the body is a 'body-subject' and fundamentally is our 'medium for having a world.' (2002: 169)

My conception of enculturated intermediality builds upon this but distinctly acknowledges and foregrounds that our mediating function is ever increasingly a complex web of interrelated, intermedial discourses within which technology now plays a principal role. Paradise and Moriarty, in their engagement with the modern technologies of their day, begin to create a collage of media through which they construct their own interpretation of events. They exist in an intermedial space, confident and comfortable with multiple strands of information both linguistic and imagistic. Now in the 21st century we have enmeshed visual and digital media into our lives to such an extent that it has informed every aspect of our consciousness *and* our **pre-reflective** operation.

Enculturation, as proposed by Phillip Kottak (1994) is the process by which a person learns the cultural norms and values of a society through their experience and interaction with it. He identifies three processes of enculturation; two of which are conscious and one being unconscious. Firstly, we can be taught directly by others about the values such as from teachers or parents. Secondly we can observe cultural behaviours and then emulate them. Finally, we can absorb behaviours unconsciously and assimilate them into our consciousness of which our body is a central, phenomenological aspect.

Consciously and unconsciously we are bombarded with the technologies (technical media) of a digital world that make all 20th and 21st century media and their content

readily available through remediation. The Internet houses and re-presents filmic and televisual media from across this century as well as the last, from the epics of Cecil B. de Mille to the cartoons of Hanna Barbera. Digital broadcasters store and screen countless programmes and channels that allow us to access seminal work from generations ago or simply from the day before. The value of retaining knowledge and memory are diminishing as we have instant access to that which we have forgotten or never knew. The art of appropriation and re-appropriation have a newly acquired cultural value.

We are able to engage with simultaneous media, not simply receiving information but reacting to it and having agency over it. By means of illustration I offer a window into my own Saturday afternoons when utopian time permits. I sit watching a sports bulletin in which several screens within the frame of the television monitor display rapidly shifting information at the same moment as I engage with the voice of the presenter/s. Simultaneously I have a football radio commentary broadcasting alongside this as I note that Barnsley have beaten Leeds United. I send a text to my friend, a Leeds fan; my texting hands and fingers 'disappear' as I engage in the act of gloating and continue to peruse the screens. The live event of football has been remediated almost instantaneously into a myriad of different mediated forms, none of which are alien to me. Our perceptual field has adjusted to accommodate and engage with simultaneity and every generation embraces this a little more.

There have been many studies in recent years that have considered the cultural literacies of children and young people. John Pascarella writes:

Recent events in popular culture have incited what Jenkins et al. (2006) connote as youth membership in forms of participatory culture. Full membership in participatory culture requires learners to adopt digital literacies situated in new media environments that are sustained by the Internet and multimodal telecommunication devices. (2008: 247)

Such literacies, he goes on to note, may draw upon existing cultural practices but create new 'dialogical encounters' (248) that are beyond traditional theorisations. Drawing upon the pedagogical writings of Graham Longford and the critical constructivism of Joe L. Kincheloe he also suggests that 'many learners lack the abilities of critical analyses and evaluation of the social and institutional rules, regulations, and norms embedded in those environments and cultural practices.' (251) In response to this challenge he states: 'Critical constructivists offer students opportunities to examine those norms rather than to accept them at face value.' (251)

The 'body schema': our extended sense of our body in the world (see section on Maurice Merleau – Ponty); for many young people now encompasses control pads, joysticks and mobile phones, which are an almost invisible extension of their corporeality. In 1945 Merleau-Ponty gave the following example of an object as extension of body schema: 'Once the [blind man's] stick has become a familiar instrument, the world of feel-able things recedes and now begins, not at the outer skin of the hand, but at the end of the stick.' (2002: 175-176) In the 21st century the

i-phone or PSP may act as even more potent exemplars of the societal integration of media into the schema. Of equal significance I would argue is that the contemporary body itself has assimilated mediated processes into its automatic, pre-reflective motor and postural functions, as alluded to earlier in the section on hypermediality. It is in this regard that I distinguish this embodied state as distinct from the digitally aware learner identified by Carroll et al. (2006, 2009) or Jensen (2008). I am suggesting that such awareness becomes consciously and unconsciously embodied and impacts upon performative action and interaction. Additionally we can distinguish this state from the body as hypermedium as we not only can 'house' diverse media within our schema but fuse them: the body as an inter-medium itself. In the observations of the actors working with *imitating the dog* this could be identified in their ability to embody filmic personae, with little or no reference to visual exemplar, through their physicality and voice. This was seen in their ability to replicate mannerisms or posture of known films and also in their embodied understanding of filmic ontology. For example they immediately knew how to simulate discontinuous space in which, for example, two characters engage in conversation but actually look away from each other as if into camera for a solo close up shot. Directorial notes could then be given with this enculturated knowledge in mind.

These propositions of the body as a hypermedium and/or enculturated intermedium remind us that we as humans are not just open to the experience of media but that we are being fundamentally altered by our interaction with them. To close this brief introduction to enculturated intermediality it is worth revisiting two observations

made by theorists cited earlier. Firstly Juliana Saxton stated that: ‘... it is possible that our fascination with the new media will change how our brains are wired.’ (2010: 231) Whilst she may personally have had reservations about this I would prefer to think of it as an organic shift that will not ‘dull our empathic responses’ (232) but open up new potentialities for performance making and learning. Secondly, Nibbelink and Merx observed that: ‘The fact that our reality is constantly mediated has become invisible.’ (2010: 227) Intermedial pedagogy has the potential to make this enculturated discourse visible and allow learners to reflect upon this state of being and how they may find agency within it.

Constructivism: theory and pedagogy

Jean Piaget, one of the pioneers of constructivist thinking famously proposed ‘Intelligence organizes the world by organizing itself.’ (1989: 162 - 163) This succinctly identifies the underlying principle of constructivism, akin to phenomenology, in its assertion that our *experience* of the world is of paramount importance rather than a pursuit of a nominal external reality. It is not a denial of reality but recognition that we cannot deduce an independent version of it, as we may never remove ourselves from our own subjective state of being and experience. The radical constructivist Ernst von Glasersfeld emphasised this conceptualisation of how knowledge is constructed when he wrote:

The revolutionary aspect of Constructivism lies in the assertion that knowledge cannot and need not be 'true' in the sense that it matches ontological reality, it only has to be 'viable' in the sense that it fits within the experiential constraints that limit the cognizing organism's possibilities of acting and thinking. (1989: 162)

Inherent in the constructivist perspective is a rejection of 'objectivist' paradigms in which knowledge is imparted or transmitted from teacher to student. Jerome Bruner has referred to constructivism simply as 'meaning making' (1990) and Jean Louis Le Moigne, writing a comparison between Piaget and von Glasersfeld, stated that their 'shared epistemological core' for constructivism was 'the critical meditation of active experience' and that this impulse 'drives the development of human knowledge, which transforms the understanding of this experience.' (2011: 154)

Social constructivism (heavily influenced by the work of John Dewey and Lev Vygotsky) contends that this experientially learnt knowledge is constructed in a social domain and that meaning is made through interactions and partnerships between teachers and students rather than hierarchies. (Dewey 1897, Bruning et al. 1999) Dewey, over a century ago, wrote in *My Pedagogic Creed*:

The teacher is not in the school to impose certain ideas or to form certain habits in the child, but is there as a member of the community to select the influences which shall affect the child and to assist him in properly responding to these. Thus

the teacher becomes a partner in the learning process,
 guiding students to independently discover meaning within
 the subject area. (1897: 77)

Joe L. Kincheloe developed the concept of critical constructivism which foregrounded the political and cultural discourses that mediate our life experience and that therefore should be critiqued and made explicit in the learning environment. John Pascarella, in his review of Kincheloe's writings defined critical constructivism and its pedagogy as an investigation of 'how the world is socially constructed, how all knowers are historical and social subjects, how understanding pedagogy in this context involves critical analyses of these constructions and the processes in which certain knowledge is validated...' (2008: 247) Kincheloe himself stated that educators should recognize 'that nothing represents a neutral perspective. (...) Indeed, no truly objective way of seeing exists. Nothing exists before consciousness shapes it into something we perceive.' (2005: 8) His critical approach sought to ask in whose interest the knowledge was being formed and communicated and was it in service of democratic and emancipatory ends? (2005: 151)

These perspectives resonate with the consciously constructed nature of intermediality as envisaged in terms of the theatrical hypermedium and with the arguments made for intermediality as critical, discursive pedagogy as put forward by Azcárate and de Zepetnek and Nibbelink and Merx. Within a constructivist educational paradigm emphasis is placed on context (Duffy and Jonassen 1992) with learning situated in experiential circumstances (Brown et al. 1989) that draw upon

and privilege the learners culture. Bednar et al. (1992) write that: 'learning must be situated in a rich context, reflective of real-world contexts for this constructive process to occur and transfer to environments beyond the school or training classroom.' (22) This is significant from my perspective as throughout this study I utilise the concept of enculturated intermediality, the embodied familiarity and articulation of contemporary intermedia, that should be recognised within the learner.

Constructivist theory, particularly that of Piaget and von Glasersfeld, also corresponds strongly with phenomenology and Deleuzian theory in its attention to the concepts of time and space. Piaget posited the idea that children construct a complex sense of how the external world exists both within their immediate experience but also in temporal and spatial terms outside of this immediacy. He developed the concept of 'object permanence' (1937) referring to a child's understanding that objects exist when outside of their own immediate perception and hence have an emergent sense of conceptual time and space. Von Glasersfeld develops this theme in his own work later in the 20th century. He highlights what he refers to as the 'parallelism' of how we experience time and space. (1994: 7) Alongside our immediate sense of the world he proposes that we construct *proto-space* and *proto-time*. He clarifies that proto-space '... is not yet a metric space, and does not yet comprise any spatial relations. It is merely a kind of repository where things can be put to keep their individual identity while they are not being experienced.' (1994: 6) This concept then necessitates the question as to what these 'objects' are doing whilst in proto-space which raises the need to address their

temporal existence. In his explanation of proto-time we may begin to see correlations with Deleuze and phenomenology's conception of time in which past, present and future co-exist in a single moment. He writes: 'It is different from the notion of proto-space because in it there are already the notions of "before" and "after". But this "before" and "after" is constructed by the projection of the subject's experiences on things in the repository that are not in the field of experience.' (1994: 7) This parallelism of time and space in real and conceptual terms can be seen throughout intermedial practice and reminds us of the potential for intermedial pedagogy to explore the ways in which we experience the world beyond the immediate situation we exist within. It may be said that we are always *within and without* space and time.

It is critical to recognise in this explication of constructivism that there are a plethora of models of educational constructivism. Matthews (2000) for example delineated eighteen models including didactic, dialectical as well as radical. Virginia Richardson (2003), referring to the work of D.C. Phillips (2000), suggests that most of these derivations can be seen to fall under one of two categories – *social* or *psychological* constructivism. (2003: 1624 – 1625) *Social* focuses on 'the ways in which power, the economy, political and social factors affect the ways in which groups of people form understandings and formal knowledge about their world' (ibid) whereas *psychological* relates to how 'individual learners actively construct the meaning around phenomena, and that these constructions are idiosyncratic, depending in part on the learner's background knowledge.' (ibid) Richardson also makes the significant distinction that writing and reflection on constructivist education were

predominantly centred on theories of learning but this should be distinguished from pedagogy itself. In other words, thought had been given to the imperatives underpinning learning such as drawing upon learners' backgrounds, group dialogue, challenging existing beliefs and so forth, but little had been written on how this translated into teaching. I would suggest that arts education, in its foregrounding of an exploration of self-in-the-world, is perhaps one of the most advanced fields in conceptualising and applying constructivism within the classroom or workshop environment. However, in stating this there should be no assumption that intermediality can be conveniently slotted into an existing paradigm, as it creates its own set of particularities that will be revisited in the case studies and the final chapter: **Conclusions: My Experience Tells Me.**

Specifically in relation to undergraduate drama practice, both the constructivist model and the conception of the learner as a medium are applied in Bjørn Rasmussen's recent article *The 'good enough' drama: reinterpreting constructivist aesthetics and epistemology in drama education* (2010) in which he highlights the layers of experiential learning that may develop within a drama process. He argues that learning occurs in both the aesthetic domain of making the artwork but also in the social construct of the learning environment and both are heavily informed by the mediated life experiences of the students.

The constructivist artist or teacher believes that the self, meaning and knowledge is developed under the influence of all present and 'interacting' language, materials, environment, bodily acts, cognitive and affective

representations. This means that the situated experience and generated cognition does not emerge primarily from 'literature' or 'curriculum' alone, but possibly from all locally invested stimuli and experience. When the dramatic language is involved, the aesthetic medium and its forms are also highly influential, taking part in the mediation of invested contributions and by that potentially transforming everyday experience. This experiential process of meaning and knowing evidently also includes a personal life-world ... (533)

For Rasmussen (citing an undergraduate improvisation project) the process is imperative to the learning, hence the notion of a 'good enough' drama that may not be artistically refined but may act as a vehicle for intensive learning experiences. He notes in his conclusion:

Our research showed that the general tendency of the drama is not its shared and generalised common 'messages', rather its multiple foci, its 'both and' insights. The collective creation of a shared story was counteracted by many individual intentional 'projects', introduced from the life-world of individual participants. The impulse to round off both form and meaning in some elegant gesture of closure was counteracted by an urge for a continued, playful exploration. (543)

This emphasis on process and the continual pursuit of new constructions of knowledge is central to the case study examples to follow, as both directors and performers refer to processes of 'becoming' and 'transforming', always in transition. John Dewey affirmed this perpetual and cyclical principle of education when he stated: 'I believe finally, that education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience; that the process and the goal of education are one and the same thing.' (1897: 78) The 'life-world' that Rasmussen refers to invokes the terminology of Jürgen Habermas who perceived lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*) as the fundamental touchstone informing our worldviews. Writing on Habermas's later work on lifeworld, Michael Pusey refers to the phenomenon as 'that vast stock of taken for granted definitions and understandings of the world that give coherence and direction to our everyday actions and interactions.' (1995: 58) The notion of 'life-world' may be viewed as a connecting thread between constructivism and phenomenology at this stage. A creative process therefore which enables an exploration of these 'definitions and understandings' may also be considered radical, in the words of Nibbelink and Merx, as it disrupts and seeks reappraisal of many assumptions about the self and the world.

Phenomenology: an intermedial lens

In the constructivist perspective that has been considered so far there is an inherent emphasis on the situated experience of the material body; the whole person experiencing and interpreting the world. This correlation inevitably draws us towards

the potentiality of phenomenology as a productive lens in this inquiry as its central premise is the philosophical study of subjective experience and consciousness. Bjørn Rasmussen himself identifies the link between constructivist and phenomenological perspectives as he writes: 'This experiential process of meaning and knowing evidently also includes a personal life-world, which leads some researchers to link phenomenology and constructivism (Sleeter 2000; Rasmussen 1998).' (2010: 533) Ernst von Glasersfeld underscored the resonance between these two paradigms when concluding his thoughts on constructivism in *The Construction of Knowledge* (1987). He wrote: 'It makes no ontological claims. It does not purport to describe any absolute reality, but only phenomena of our own experience.' (7)

Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty are arguably the three most significant figures in the field of phenomenology and offer complementary, although discreet, phenomenological paradigms which I will outline in brief at this point and reference throughout the analyses. Many scholars, it must be acknowledged, have drawn upon phenomenology in their critique of theatre and film as discreet media but now its potential as a paradigm for intermedial evaluation is being recognised to an ever-greater degree as can be seen in *Closer: Performance, Technologies, Phenomenology* by Susan Kozel (2007) and several chapters of *Mapping Intermediality in Performance* (2010). For this study phenomenology provides a fertile lens as I am seeking to understand the experience of the student within the intermedial rehearsal and performance spaces and how their perception of these inter-related phenomena could be articulated and harnessed effectively within teaching and learning.

The recurring paradigm of *within and without* may be seen as apposite to the analysis and application of phenomenology in this context as my twofold proposition is that phenomenology creates the potential for both situated (*within*) and meta – cognitive (*without*) analysis of intermedial practice. To be more precise, in consideration of the *without* perspective, I suggest that phenomenology, as expressed in transcendental terms by Husserl, furnishes us with a substantive framework to build complex meta-awareness of our intermedial lives as espoused by Jensen, Azcárate and de Zepetnek and others and as expressed through the conception of the hypermedial environment. In partnership with this however exists the existential phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty and the hermeneutic phenomenology of Heidegger whose conceptions of the body situated in the world offers a theoretical frame that allows a valuation and evaluation of the experiential and sensorial moments *within* intermedial practice, particularly if we think of the performers or audience in these moments as intermedia themselves.

To contextualise this section I would like to briefly revisit the thoughts of Nibbelink and Merx, as their analysis of intermedial work as a ‘resensibilisation of the senses’ (2010: 218) bridges both of these *within* and *without* perspectives. Let us again consider three of their key contentions as they reflect the principle phenomenological challenges. Firstly they suggest: ‘intermedial performance often plays with or even explicitly deconstructs perceptual expectations and produces sensations ranging from subtle experiences of surprise or confusion, to more uncanny experiences of dislocation, displacement or alienation.’ (219) Secondly they contest: ‘Intermediality invites a new perception and realignment of the body; one

perceives what was not seen before, or one remembers what was forgotten or had been taken for granted.’ (227) What I propose through the application of phenomenological models of thinking is that cine-theatrical intermediality offers a very particular set of insights that allows both a reflection on our self from *within* our own embodied experience but also reflection on ourselves and our experiences from *without* through a process of ‘stepping outside’ our own experience. Eugen Fink (Husserl’s assistant) referred to Husserl’s conception of transcending our everyday perceptions of the world as the process of ‘blasting open our captivation-in-an-acceptedness.’ (1995: 41) Film and the ‘mediaphoric body’ (Pluta 2010) that film may facilitate enables the live performer to have a heightened sense of their own body in space but also offers, as will be explored in all the case studies, a liberation to view the world outside of their own ‘frame’. Thirdly, in relation to Nibberlink and Merx I would note that phenomenology, and specifically a phenomenology of intermediality offers a response to the constant ‘negotiating and shifting between different and conflicting medial realities, moving in and out of perceptual worlds, relating different impressions and signs, looking for a point of connection that might integrate the confusing and disturbing sensations in a meaningful whole, however unstable and ephemeral this whole may be.’ (220) What I seek to identify in this section and then throughout the analyses is that a productive correlation may be found between phenomenology, intermedial theory and practice and constructivist concepts of learning. By this I mean that the major schools of phenomenological thinking find a correspondence with the notions of the sensorialised, intermedial body and the hypermedium and through these connected lenses we can consider

how educators may build a radical and liberating pedagogy that places genuine agency at its core.

Let us first consider Edmund Husserl who may be regarded as the founding father of phenomenology. Husserl reasoned that consciousness was the grounding of all experience and, contesting that 'consciousness is always consciousness of something' (Casebier 1991: 15) he developed (building upon the work of Franz Brentano) the concept of *intentionality*. By this he meant that our psychological state was always in relation to something. For example we may have a fear but it is of something such as the dark or heights. We, according to Husserl, direct our consciousness towards something: we are a subject confronted by objects and phenomena. He referred to his own work as 'transcendental' phenomenology as he proposed that we had the capacity to both engage with the sense data in front of us but transcend this and thereby apperceive, or see through to, the significance of the phenomena. For example we may perceive the lines and shapes within an image but transcend these simultaneously to perceive the content and meaning of the image. Allan Casebier, in *Film and Phenomenology*, uses Husserl's example of Dürer's engraving *Knight, Death and the Devil*. Whilst we can recognise the hyletic data (lines, patterns etc) we can 'see through' this apperceptively (1991: 13) to the meaning that is being constructed about God, morality and mortality. Husserl argued that an awareness of intentional consciousness would foster an unprejudiced perspective on our worldviews. This already begins to suggest a correlation with the meta-awareness engendered by the hypermedial domain of performance. Of more interest for this study is Husserl's conception of the 'phenomenological reduction',

which is the intentional desire to rid oneself of assumptions about the phenomena we experience and re-conceive them through 'bracketing' our natural standpoint and putting aside presuppositions. Eric Matthews, citing Eugen Fink's formulation of Husserl's reduction, explains that:

... the reduction consists in an attitude of 'wonder' towards the world. We cannot withdraw totally from the world ...but we can relax the ties, which bind us to things in our practical dealings with them, so that the sheer strangeness of the world becomes more apparent. (2006: 17)

Husserl, in his posthumously published work *Ideen II: Phänomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution (Phenomenological studies on the constitution)* (1952) elucidated how the body was not just a material object but a 'psycho-physical subject' or '*Leib*'. (1989: 151) He identified and schematised four main features of an embodied subjectivity. Firstly the living body can be distinguished from other material objects because it is sensitive, 'it becomes a body only by incorporating ... sensations.' (158-159) Husserl argued that sensations are localised throughout the body and cannot simply be redirected to the locus of the mind. Secondly he identified the body as expressive and responsive, referring to it as 'an organ of the will, the one and only Object which ... is movable immediately and spontaneously and is a means for producing a mediate spontaneous movement in other things.' (159). Thirdly, and echoing the principles of constructivist learning, he viewed the body as the 'zero point' from which we calibrate all our spatial judgements. Husserl

reasoned that all our perceptions had to come from our body as it stands in space and time, as 'I do not have the possibility of distancing myself from my Body, or my Body from me.' (167) This approach, as with constructivism, does not discount objective, scientific knowledge but simply argues that there cannot be any pure objectivism removed from the body as we are always within our own corporeality. Finally Husserl emphasised that the body was the central organ of perception and hence perception of the world would not be possible without it. However, Husserl's conception still focused on what Hubert L. Dreyfus, one of the foremost analysts of Heidegger, refers to as a 'self sufficient mind' interacting with an 'independent world.' (1991: 49)

Martin Heidegger, whilst sharing some of Husserl's terminology, perceived our existence in the world as a much more situated experience. Heidegger's most famous work *Being and Time* published in 1927 built upon Husserl's writings but began to delineate key differences, as Dreyfus highlights:

Heidegger breaks with Husserl and the Cartesian tradition by substituting for epistemological questions concerning the relation of the knower and known, ontological questions concerning what sorts of beings we are and how our being is bound up with the intelligibility of the world. (1991: 3)

In *Being and Time* Heidegger puts forward the conception of *Dasein*, or *being in the world*, to explicate the experiential *way of being* that we inhabit. We are in the world, as fish are in water, and therefore all our constructions and philosophies of

how we exist are situated in this experience. Perception therefore is not a case of disinterested contemplation of an external world but a continuous immersion. Distinguishing his own position from Husserl he wrote: '*Being* is something quite different from a mere confrontation, whether by way of observation or by way of action; that is, it is not the being-occurrent-together of a subject and object.' (1967: 221) Heidegger's view is often seen as anti-cognitivist as he focused on the pre-reflective, embodied engagement that we have with the world, which is imbued with the cultural 'waters' through which we swim. Understanding *Dasein* for Heidegger is a constant process of interpretation (hermeneutics) that enables us to construct our understanding of the world.

Time, as the title of his principle work suggests, is central to our *being-in-the-world* and our understanding of *being*. He wrote: 'The existential and ontological constitution of the totality of *Dasein* is grounded in temporality.' (1967: 437) We are, in Heidegger's view, situated within temporality and in *Division II of Being and Time* he devotes significant analysis to this subject. He proposed that we have a continual concern or care (*sorge*) towards time as our material body and our memory intertwine between concerns of past, present and future. We live in 'anticipation' of the future and concern about death. He uses the German word *Vorlaufen* (to run ahead) (1967: 265) to express our capacity to project forward towards our mortal future, which is also inextricably linked to our awareness of having already been in the past (*Gewesenheit*). Our perception of the present is therefore informed and constructed through these perspectives. Robert Cavalier summates Heidegger's conception of the present when he writes:

The present is made to come to pass in the sense of a 'making present' (*Gegenwartegens*). It is 'born' of the dynamic interplay of future and past. Thus the present, in this authentic mode, arises out of other moments. It is never an isolated, discreet "now." (2012)

However Heidegger emphasises that the present is not trapped or pre-prescribed by its position between a sense of past and future. Indeed our awareness of our position in time liberates our potential within the here and now. Simon Critchley in his 2009 *Guardian* blog on Heidegger wrote:

For Heidegger, the present is not some endless series of now points that I watch flowing by. Rather, the present is something that I can seize hold of and resolutely make my own. What is opened in the anticipation of the future is the fact of our having-been which releases itself into the present moment of action. This is what Heidegger calls "the moment of vision" (*Augenblick*, literally "glance of the eye"). (2009)

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, working in the post war years, wrote several major texts on phenomenology including *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945, trans. 2002) and *The Primacy of Perception* (1964, trans. 1993). In his work he extends Husserl's notion of the body as a living and expressive organism that is not merely in a dialogic relationship with the world but is *in* the world. Opposing the Cartesian view that the body is something that we are conceptually disembodied from, he, like Heidegger,

emphasised the situated nature of our experience. He stated in *The Primacy of Perception* that ‘...there is no inner man, man is in the world, and only in the world does he know himself.’ (1993: p. xi) Later in the same text he succinctly reiterated the continual symbiosis between our embodiment and our experience of the world when he stated: ‘Inside and outside are inseparable.’ (1993: 407) Luna Dolezal, citing the work of Merleau-Ponty in her own critique of tele-presence, offers a more fulsome analysis:

... the human subject is an embodied subject, woven into the fabric of the world; it is inextricably and pre-reflectively in relation with the physical context in which it finds itself. As such, it is not the case that I find and experience my body first, and then employ it to explore the world. Rather, my body and the world are in an inextricable tangle, such that in matters of perception and experience one cannot be said to precede the other. (2009: 213)

Merleau-Ponty developed his own iteration of the principle of the ‘transparent body’ (1945, 1964) to explain the phenomenological experience when the body ‘disappears’ from our perception of the world, such as when the hand ‘disappears’ from our perception as we write. Drew Leder explicates this phenomenon as the ‘absent body’ (1990)³⁴ and Shaun Gallagher echoes this conception when referring to the experience of the ‘absently available body.’ He writes:

³⁴ Leder’s conception of ‘The Absent Body’ (1990) is analysed extensively in **Butterflies**.

When the lived body is “in tune” with the environment, when events are ordered smoothly, when the body is engaged in a task that holds the attention of consciousness, then the body remains in a mute and shadowy existence and is lived through in a non-conscious experience. (2004: 277)

Human beings, in Merleau-Ponty’s view, had a ‘body schema’ (1945), which were the automatic, preconscious processes by which we move, react and spatially calculate our engagement with the world. He wrote, as an example: ‘If I am in the habit of driving a car, I enter a narrow opening and see that I can ‘get through’ without comparing the width of the opening with that of the wings, just as I go through a doorway without checking the width of the doorway with that of my body.’ (2002: 165)

It is important to recognise that scholars (e.g. Casebier 1991, Dreyfus 1991, Frampton 2006) have distinguished between Husserl’s *transcendent* phenomenology (centred on the his notion that we have the capacity to *transcend* our perceptual acts and connote what we perceive), Heidegger’s *hermeneutics* centring on interpretative experience and Merleau-Ponty’s more *existential* conception of the body inextricably interwoven into perceptual experience. However, for this study, whilst the contrasts and divergences between all three theorists will be acknowledged, they each offer productive lenses through which to analyse the constructed nature of our *everydayness* (to use Heidegger’s term), correlating notably on the subject of temporality with the writings of Deleuze and the

constructivists and with the themes of presence and absence as iterated by Drew Leder (1990).

On the subject of *inter-subjectivity*, which will re-occur as a theme within the case studies, there is a significant degree of agreement between all three writers. From a phenomenological perspective, inter-subjectivity is an analysis of how we may know the intentions of another human being and understand their perspective when we are situated in our own body. Dan Zahavi, in *Beyond Empathy: Phenomenological Approaches to Intersubjectivity* (2001) explores the correlations between Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. All three theorists, he notes, agree that our ability to engage with others is more than mere empathy and is built upon an *a priori* understanding of 'otherness'. Heidegger suggests, according to Zahavi, that the 'objects' we first encounter in life are those of indeterminate 'others' (chairs, items of clothing and so forth). Zahavi proposes that a fundamental condition of *Dasein* '... is being-with (*mitsein*) others, regardless of whether or not other persons are actually present. (Heidegger, 1989, p. 414)' (2001: 154) Our sense of 'others' is inextricably linked to our awareness of self as we realise that we also have a presence that phenomenally itself to 'others'. Merleau-Ponty is unequivocal when he states that 'the self-experience of subjectivity must contain a dimension of otherness.' (2001: 162) Zahavi highlights Husserl's contention that any objective understanding of the world is built upon *transcendent inter-subjectivity* (1973) by which he means that our sense of objective validity is mediated by our awareness that 'others' perceive significance in the same object or experience in front of us. He extends this analysis of our awareness of 'other' when he refers to situations in

which we have a heightened experience of ourselves through the experience of others, a condition he calls 'original reciprocal co-existence.' (1973) This mode often phenomenalisises itself in intermedial work as we may view the first person perspective through a lens or witness ourselves on screen *and* simultaneously witness the perception of this 'self' by others in the audience.

When I realize that I can be an *alter ego* for the other just as he can be it for me, a marked change in my own constitutive significance takes place. The absolute difference between self and other disappears. The other conceives of me as an other, just as I conceive of him as a self (Husserl, 1973b, pp. 243–4). As a consequence, I come to the realization that I am only one among many and that my perspective on the world is by no means privileged (Husserl, 1973d, p. 645). (Zahavi 2001: 160)

As a final postscript to this section it is worth considering the subject of **agency** from a phenomenological perspective as, in educational terms, we run the risk of assuming our understanding of the word under the general parameters of 'influence' or 'authorship'. Whilst these are helpful 'umbrellas' to shelter beneath, a more precise reflection on the nature of agency and how we experience it in the world will aid pedagogical reflection and to this end I turn to Shaun Gallagher's explication and analysis of the term as framed within a phenomenological paradigm. (2012)

Gallagher initially distinguishes between a sense of ownership (SO) and a sense of agency (SA). We may be aware that an action or event is occurring within us or to us

(the movement of a leg or heartbeat for example), so we have a sense of ownership but this is distinct from controlling or being aware that we are controlling that action or event which is a sense of agency (SA). (2012: 18) On an initial level, a sense of agency is pre-reflective which he refers to as SA1. He writes: 'Pre-reflective self-awareness refers to the fact that in any experience there is an implicit, first- person awareness of that experience.' (16) In this respect a sense of agency is 'phenomenologically recessive' (18) as it operates in the background of our experience and consciousness. Gallagher distinguishes SA1 from SA2 which he describes as a 'higher-order, reflective phenomenon' (18) which is correlated to our ability to self reflect on our own actions within the world. He cites Stephens and Graham who note that 'such explanations amount to a sort of theory of the person's agency or intentional psychology.' (1994: 101 and 2000: 161) SA2 is constructed and monitored in relation to 'our beliefs, desires and intentions' (Gallagher 2012: 18), often infused and informed by our 'future-directed intentions (F-intentions)' and our 'present-directed intentions (P-intentions)' as explained by Elizabeth Pacherie (2006, 2007). In other words we may conceive of higher order agency (SA2) in wider temporal terms akin to Deleuzian and phenomenological conceptions of the term. This correlation is evident in Pacherie's explanation of our long-term sense of agency (SA2) that she describes as:

... a sense of oneself as an agent apart from any particular action, i.e., a sense of one's capacity for action over time, and a form of self-narrative where one's past actions and projected future actions are given a general coherence and

unified through a set of overarching goals, motivations, projects and general lines of conduct. (2007: 6 in Gallagher 2012: 26)

Gallagher highlights that our sense of agency is highly complex and that within that complexity there is a degree of ambiguity in how we demarcate SA1 and SA2 categories. In general terms our pre-reflective sense of agency (SA1) is 'part of our basic feeling of embodiment' (28) and is 'experientially indistinguishable from a basic sense of ownership (SO)'. (ibid) For other actions we are more 'reflectively conscious of and concerned about what we are doing' (ibid) which we may attribute to SA2. However Gallagher is keen to point out that SA1 in itself is an intricate construction that can be easily disrupted. In ordinary activity it is a background occurrence relying on efferent and afferent flows of information into and out of the body schema. But these can be disrupted (as also indicated by Drew Leder 1990) through physiological shifts (pain, exhaustion etc) that in themselves can be informed or activated by shifts in future or present intentions. To use my own example, if I am engaged in a triathlon (as I often foolishly find myself) my immediate physical actions are instinctive and hence pre-reflective (SA1). However, if I at some point become disheartened by my progress or position in the race and my F-intention and P-intention are reconsidered (so that I now no longer wish to compete at my age and therefore no longer wish to overtake the man in front) then my immediate embodied experience alters so that I become acutely aware of the pain in my legs and the unnatural positioning of my arms upon the aero-bars of the bike. It is also the case that I do not need to have a complex F or P-intention in order to have

conscious agency (SA2) over an activity. Gallagher cites the example of reaching for a drink because you are thirsty as this is more than pre-reflective but less than significantly self-conscious and reflective. In his conclusions Gallagher underlines the fact that our lived experience of agency is therefore not a conscious stratification of pre-reflective and reflective levels. He writes:

Although conceptually we may distinguish between different levels (first-order, higher- order), and neuroscientifically we may be able to identify different brain processes responsible for these different contributories, in our everyday phenomenology we tend to experience agency in a more holistic, qualitative, and ambiguous way which may be open to a description in terms of degree. (2012: 29)

From a pedagogical perspective and in relation to the analysis that follows I am interested in how agency manifests itself but also in how it is disrupted. The contention that I will elucidate in the case study chapters and **Conclusions: My Experience Tells Me** is that intermedial practice has the potential to creatively disrupt our sense of agency, which can bring both challenges and opportunities to the participants as they experience and explore their vulnerability within the performance environment and the world at large.

In conclusion to this final chapter of **Mapping Constellations** it is first of all pertinent to note that the three theoretical frameworks of constructivism, phenomenology and enculturated intermediality resonate with the earlier paradigms of mediality and modality, particularly as explicated by Lars Elleström. In his theory of media construction for example, he places particular emphasis on the socially constructed nature of media with the reference to qualifying aspects and the importance of their real *and* conceptual temporal and spatial framework. Up to this point Elleström's model has been utilised as a principle reference to describe media interaction and, as we now move into the analytical chapters, I will address the pedagogical significance of his ideas as terminological and critical tools.

In developing a rationale for a more distinctive intermedial pedagogy I will be seeking correlations between constructivist and phenomenological perspectives that are informed by aesthetic awareness *and* current theorisation and practice in the field of intermediality. Borrowing the term 'both / and' as used by Rasmussen and also Robin Nelson (2010) to denote that media can be simultaneously distinct and interlinked, my intention is to explain and evaluate the potential for a pedagogy that can *both* construct a critical discourse utilising the hypermedium of theatre *and* harness the learning that can be experienced *within* the mediatised performative body. The reference to 'both / and' also signifies that these two experiences are not mutually exclusive dialogues and the symbiosis between them is a fundamental aspect of a reflective and dynamic pedagogy.

Case Studies: Cine -Theatrical Pedagogy in Practice

Can Dogs Speak French?

Preface

Can Dogs Speak French?: Pedagogy of fragility centres on the notion of self in time and space. The concepts of *remediation* and *transmediation* are foregrounded as the chapter considers how pedagogy may respond to the fluid dialogues present in contemporary intermedial practice. A range of theoretical paradigms are drawn upon to critique professional practice and consider its implications for student agency. The work of the Lancaster based company *imitating the dog* offers a central case study to interrogate the challenges of hybridising media forms and texts within one theatrical spectacle.

Alongside the potentiality of remediation developed by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin and transmediation as iterated by Irina Rajewsky, attention will be given to the significance of film theory within the intermedial debate and in particular the conceptions of time and movement through space as proposed by Gilles Deleuze. His proposition that cinematic perception may be seen as a predominant mode of perceiving the world offers a radical means of conceiving what we may have agency over as we witness our *fragile* presence within the world. Parallels are drawn between Deleuze's notions of perception and phenomenological approaches to *being in the world*. Through these theoretical models we can then consider what this may entail for constructivist paradigms of teaching and learning.

Can Dogs Speak French?

Pedagogy of fragility

We find ourselves in the moment of transit where time and space cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion. (Bhaba 2004: 1)

Introduction

In 2009 *imitating the dog* performed their new work *Kellerman* at Warwick Arts Centre. Although I had seen such work before in which the theatrical experience was infused with a filmic aesthetic, the level to which this company sought to transmediate filmic ontology into the live environment compelled me to reflect on how such work may reconfigure the contemporary performance experience. It also raised a concurrent question for me regarding its potential impact on teaching such practices.

This chapter centres on my experiences with that company and the investigation into the practices and pedagogical implications of remediation and transmediation on the devising process and the experience of the actors and creative team within that. Within the chapter I propose that such deterritorialised practice creates a constant process of transformation, of 'becoming', which I suggest may be

recognised and celebrated as *pedagogy of fragility*. To address this I consider an interconnected framework of constructivist, phenomenological and Deleuzian theory to articulate how students may reconsider their agency within this fluid intermedial domain and their own lives.

In my observations of the actors and directors from *imitating the dog* (as in the case of *Lightwork*) I consciously see them in a duality of roles, both as professionals but also as surrogate students and teachers in my effort to consider the discourse between professional practice and pedagogy. Inherent in this model of reflection is an intention to witness and interrogate the experience from both *within and without* as highlighted in previous chapters. Specifically in this case I am concerned with the situated experience of the actor *within* the role and also *without* or outside the role, as they step back from their own embodiment and seek to have some agency over the meta-narrative of the work and the mediating process of which they are a part. I propose that the intermedial practice of companies like *imitating the dog* creates specific artistic and pedagogical challenges as it requires participants to hover between or simultaneously exist within both their own corporeal presence in tandem with an allied awareness of the complex layering and interactions of media upon them. In response to this I reflect upon the potential for building upon students own enculturated intermedial knowledge.

imitating the dog: the company in context

imitating the dog have been in existence since 1998, based in Leeds and Lancaster, and have since their inception sought to explore the relationship between media and the potential for storytelling in a hybrid environment. Their website announces that the company's aim is to:

... explore innovative dramaturgical techniques through incorporating new approaches in stage design, media and writing and it often draws on the aesthetics and fictional techniques of the cinema for its scenographic and thematic inspiration. (2012)

Their core creative team, as with *Ex Machina* and *Lightwork*, is a combination of directors, performers and technologists who work in unison within the rehearsal space to envisage and materialise the work. In the last ten years the central figures have been Simon Wainwright, Andrew Quick and Alice Booth with directorial input from Pete Brooks and design from Laura Hopkins. They have also drawn upon a consistent group of performers including Laura Atherton, Adam Nash, Anna Wilson-Hall and Morven Macbeth. During the period that I observed their rehearsals and production preparation the company were working on an updated version of *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls* (2009) which had originally been created under the auspices of the British Council's *Creative Collaboration* programme and performed in Greece with Greek and Cypriot actors alongside English cast members. The Greek and Cypriot performers continued to work on the piece into 2010 and the English tour and hence their interaction with the work appears within the analysis. In the

latter stages of my observations in 2011 the company began to develop the work from this production into their next show *Six Degrees Below the Horizon* (2011).

Throughout their lifespan as a company *imitating the dog* have placed material filmic structures and filmic ontology at the centre of their practice and assimilated both the contextual and operational qualifying aspects of cinema. It is in this context that I

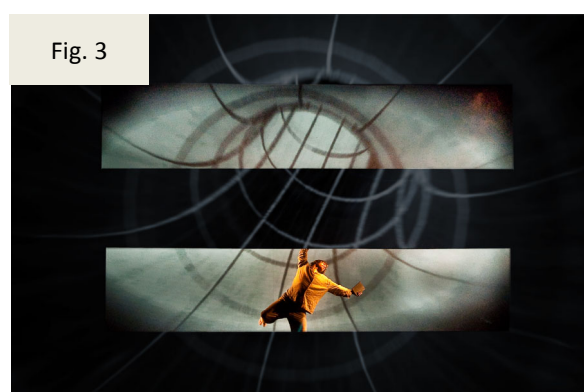


Fig. 3

proposed that such practice might be termed 'theatricalised film'³⁵ as a sub genre of cine-theatricality. Most notably British films, the French new wave and film noir have all been cited by the company as inspirations for

their work. In literal terms they have constructed for many of their recent shows, including *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls* and *Six Degrees Below the Horizon*, a filmic frame on stage so that the audience perceives the live event through precise apertures (see Fig. 3); looking in on sequences of action that are partially and consciously obscured by the limitations of the frame. The device intentionally creates certain dislocations and demands that the observer constructs their own visual and metaphoric interpretation. Events are often shown in fragments, both from a narrative perspective but also visually as bodies are often segmented across two or more apertures or only partially revealed. Spatial and temporal configurations are allied more closely to film than conventional theatre as the

³⁵ See **Cinema: reflections on filmic ontology and phenomenology** for further clarification of 'theatricalised film'.

company utilise montage and camera-like angles; birds eye view for example, that never allow the audience to settle into a constant, fixed perspective.

These transmedial techniques can be seen in both *Kellerman* (2008) and previously in *Hotel Methuselah* (2006), the latter of which focused on the life of a hotel night porter, Harry, who could not recall how he had arrived at the hotel or what his previous life was. In their own website publicity for this show they outline the relationship between this film/theatre structure and its thematic rationale:

Rodrigo Velasquez's digital cinematography creates Harry's amnesiac existence in astonishing detail. The film shows beautifully lit and composed close-ups of the characters' faces as well as scenes of the hotel's interior. As the walls and floors begin to move and perspectives shift, when the worlds of the stage and the screen are seen to pull apart, the disorientating psychic and physical experience of Harry's collapse is memorably brought to life. (2012)

The company continue this stylistic lineage of combining computer animation, pre-recorded film and live action with their most recent work *The Zero Hour* (2012) which traces three perspectives upon the same events in Berlin in the final moments of the Second World War. The work I witnessed and documented in 2010 and 2011 can therefore be seen as representative of an interconnected and ongoing exploration of particular intermedial forms, notably remediation and transmediation.

My Arrival at 'The Bar': setting the scene

Having seen *Kellerman* the previous year (2009) I had some sense of the theatrical language that the company were exploring. As mentioned previously *The Bar of Lost Souls*, by the time I came to document it, had already been performed in Greece and was now being revised for a short UK tour in 2010.

I first met up with the company at the Storey Gallery in Lancaster where they had constructed a temporary stage and set up key technological equipment including several Mac computers that were required to generate the projections and soundtracks as well as provide significant and regular sources of creative inspiration. The direction of the project was jointly led by Andrew Quick (a director of the company and drama academic from Lancaster University) and Pete Brooks; known to many in the British theatre world from his work with *Impact Theatre Co-operative* in the 1970s and 80s and particularly their influential piece *The Carrier Frequency* (1986). Alongside the directors were the cast members including Adam Nash from the UK and the Greek and Cypriot performers: Dimitris Kartokis, Nikoleta Kotsailidou, Poxini Savva and Myrto Koygiali. The number of performers was notably matched by a plethora of technologists, designers and production team members who appeared within the rehearsal space at various times throughout my period of observation. These included Adam Gregory (animator), Michael Brakey (set design), Monica Alcazar (film and visuals), Piotr Woycicki (music composition) and Andrew Crofts (stage manager/actor).

The space in the gallery is crowded when I arrive. Large flats have been built, within which are cut three apertures or picture windows through which the action is

Fig. 4



framed (see Fig. 4). There is little room to operate behind these flats or on either side and the downstage space in front is not utilised by the live performers. Computers and cabling vie for space with the production team and

actors, whilst the general *modus operandi* is for multiple processes and dialogues to be occurring simultaneously. In my observational notes I record that 'Within the acting space are several large items of set – bar, doorways etc – to be trucked in and out by performers. Cables criss-cross the space – sound files fill the air – the space is as much virtual as it is real.' (2010)

The piece is set in an unidentified Mediterranean port and the narrative of the production centres on the deathbed memories of a sailor who is confessing to his daughter and seeking to right past wrongs. His indiscretions are to an extent ambiguous and viewed as if through a dream. He absconds from the navy then becomes passionately involved with a woman in the port. The police attempt to track him down and in order to survive he becomes embroiled in a murder. However, there is not a single clear narrative and the structure of the piece is, I would suggest, as much an inference of his mental state as of his past life. The website programme notes for the production read, perhaps intentionally, like a film

trailer as the company conjure up strong visual and emotional images which are worth quoting at some length to establish the context for the creative process:

The Bar of Lost Souls can be found at the quayside. You will know it when you see it. All sorts of dissolute people can be found there: pimps, whores, sailors and petty criminals, the police and even judges. If you open the door you'll smell the stale air and you'll be able to hear singing from the little stage at the back of its darkened room. If you dare go in you best have eyes in the back of your head, you have to be so careful not to get your purse snatched or your face slashed. Yes, it's dangerous all right. But if you manage to get in, you'll never forget the experience. (...) Part musical, part dream play, *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls* is a magical realist story of forbidden love, criminality and the possibility of finding redemption in the unlikeliest of places. Exquisitely designed by Laura Hopkins (*Blackwatch*), the audience watch the action through the bar's window, as a carnival of unsavoury characters reveal themselves and the haunting sequence of tales of murder, love and forgiveness unfolds. (2012)

The analyses that follow document and evaluate the production and performance processes for this show during March and May 2010 and again in May 2011 when I revisit the company working on the final revisions of the work which will then come to be the basis for *Six Degrees Below the Horizon* (2011).

Remediation and transmediation in the context of imitating the dog

It is important to consider precisely how the company operate across media boundaries and to this end it is worth first reminding ourselves of the territories demarcated by the terms remediation and transmediation; in particular the respective explications of the terms offered to us by Jay David Bolter & Richard Grusin and Irina Rajewsky. These manifestations of media fluctuation and volatility are central to the creation of the opportunities and the challenges that may be articulated within *pedagogy of fragility*.

Bolter and Grusin influentially voiced their own view of remediation in their 1999 work *Remediation – Understanding New Media* that sought to analyse the dialogic relationship between old and new media. They were unequivocal in their proposition that all media are born out of a process of remediation as they stated: ‘We offer this simple definition: a medium is that which remediates. It is that which appropriates the techniques, forms, and social significance of other media.’ (1999: 65) They perceived media in a constant engagement of respect and rivalry with each other, echoing the thoughts of Marshall McLuhan who suggested that: ‘A new medium is never an addition to an old one, nor does it leave the old one in peace. It never ceases to oppress the older media until it finds new shapes and positions for them.’ (1964: 158) Bolter and Grusin’s concept of the ‘double logic’ of immediacy and hypermediacy that was highlighted in previous chapters will be addressed within **Bells and Meteorites**, whilst for this chapter the focus is placed on their categorisation of remediative types (1999: 44 – 49) and the implications of each.

Firstly they refer to the category of *repurposing* which may be seen as the borrowing of content from one medium to another but the original medium itself has not been 'quoted'; an example of this may be a film adaptation of a novel. It is worth noting that his concept bears comparison with Kattenbelt's description of transmediality (2008) and Rajewsky's notion of medial transposition (2005). Secondly they identify *digitization* as a significant, contemporary remedial process. They state, with resonances of Walter Benjamin, how easily material is now captured and copied digitally and represented across multiple media platforms in an instant. This is now even more ubiquitous in our daily lives (over a decade on from the original observation) from the internet images of canonical works, textual and visual discourses on facebook and twitter, filming of a live stage show, sport relayed simultaneously on a plethora of devices and so on. Thirdly they refer to the notion of one medium *absorbing* another such as when television absorbs films. To connect this to Elleström's model it may be expressed that the modalities and qualifying aspects of film in this example are represented within the technical medium of a television set and also perceived within the qualified medium of television which in a sense domesticates the original medium of film. As a subsidiary category (which they refer to as refashioning) to these three principle forms of remediation they also consider *intramediality* as they note how one medium often self references within an artistic object of the same media type and / or genre. This type of homage can be seen in recent films such as *The Artist* where silent film is both the form and subject matter of the work or in how Tom Stoppard's *Rozencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* references *Hamlet*.

Transmediation as a phenomenon has been defined in a variety of ways by a number of scholars including Kattenbelt as well as Rajewsky. As expressed in the earlier analysis of this term I am drawn more readily to Rajewsky's iteration of it and would personally enfold her concept of intermedial referencing within the bracket of transmediality. Her overarching definition of transmediality is 'the appearance of a certain motif, aesthetic, or discourse across a variety of different media' whilst she states that intermedial referencing specifically relates to the 'evocation or imitation' (2005: 52) of one medium's strategies within another; for instance the use of simulated birds-eye view shots as seen in *imitating the dog's* work as well as productions such as *Polygraph* by Robert Lepage in which the central murder scene is witnessed from above. These definitions of transmediality intersect with those of remediation itself as noted by Kattenbelt who suggested that: 'When transmediality is conceived of as the representation of one medium in and by another medium, we get very close to the very frequently used concept of remediation, introduced by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin.' (2010: 5). My stance on this, as indicated in **The stars and constellations of media**, is to perceive transmediality as a type or variant of remediation rather than as a discreet concept.

Let us consider then *imitating the dog's* productions and particularly *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls* in this context of remediation and transmediation. In terms of *repurposing*, the company does not directly take a work wholesale from one medium to another but it is certainly the case that they repurpose selected narrative elements from certain writers. During the early rehearsals, for example, Andrew Quick and Pete Brooks both cited the novels of Ezra Pound as well as the writings

and films of Jean Genet as important influences. Whilst such borrowing of material may be seen across other creative domains it is worth noting the extent to which these ideas are pursued and realized within *imitating the dog's* work. Digitization is undoubtedly a predominant feature of their practice as their productions are suffused with digital front and rear projection that is central to creating the dreamlike worlds they seek to conjure. The degree to which it is integrated is comparable with Sasha Dundjerović's notion of *techno en scène* as referenced in relation to Robert Lepage and his technologically sophisticated integration of scenography within the narrative structure. In conversation with Monica Alcazar, one of the filmmakers for the piece, it is clear how central the digital image is to the connotative construction of the work.

There are three sets of images ... the front projection is the psychological state of the character, the middle images are created by the set and locate the space and the images at the back are still and reflect characters memory ... the memory of the old man dying. (March 2010)

Due to the desegregation of digital media from the overall production there is a constant dialogue between the performers, directors and digital designers. They exist within the same space and the evocation of a mood (a recollection - image or dream - image to cite Deleuze) is a collective dialogue. This is not scenography in its traditional sense, nor is it multi-media as distinguished by Gieseckam or Kattenbelt. This is most definitely an intermedial process whereby the presence of diverse media creates a 'mutual affect'. This can be seen in the opening few minutes of the

performance as the large front projection of the dying sailor on the bed slowly cross fades/dissolves into the dream-image of his youthful self as played by Adam Nash located within one of the frame spaces. The ephemerality and fragility of the old man which is emphasised by the scale of his aged and sickened face on screen transforms and is, for a moment, simultaneously present with his flesh and blood younger persona. The three dimensional physicality and viscosity of the young actor accentuates the temporal divide between the two and the sense of a life that is both unobtainably in the past but also painfully in the present as a constant recollection-image for the old man.

Absorption is not immediately apparent in *imitating the dog's* work in terms of complete enclosure of one medium within another as in the case of films being shown on television or the internet. However if we remind ourselves of theatre's hypermedial construction then we can see how film, animation and soundscape have all been absorbed within the live environment. The company, along with many other British companies such as *1927* or *Forkbeard Fantasy* let alone worldwide, are confident in their assimilation of countless media into the stage environment; not as decorative appendages to the performers but as central to character or mediaphoric construction. In *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls* the company present the character of the dying sailor only in filmic terms with a close up of him in bed next to his daughter. There is no sense that he needs to be realised in physical terms in order for us to identify with his narrative. In *1927's The Animals and Children Took to the Streets* (2011) this reliance on an absorbed medium is even more central to the construction of the piece as the daughter of the central character only appears in

digital form; a 'rendered' presence that is part of the ensemble. Appropriation of other media within *imitating the dog's* performance is not restricted to the visual but also encompasses the aural elements: the dialogue, sound effects and even the very language that is utilized. All of the speech is lip-synced and pre-recorded. None of the onstage actors even use their own voice in the lip-sync and this is partly due to the choice of language, French, which is voiced by an unseen cast of French speakers recorded weeks before in a studio. French is used to invoke the mood of the 'nouvelle – vague' of cinema and so we read the English translation as surtitles. Every sound on stage is **artificial from knocks** at the door to murmured conversation in the bar. This method is adopted out of technical necessity so that all cues are precisely timed but it also fulfills an artistic desire to locate the performance in that uncertain hinterland between stage and screen. Whilst it can be said that remediation is an underlying process affecting all art forms as they adapt through time and borrow from each other it is certainly more of an overt and conscious practice now within contemporary performance and *imitating the dog* are a clear example of this. The live theatre space for them is a hinterland or liminal space into which multiple media can encroach either as equal partners on stage and/or as significant stimuli informing the work.

In the light of this observation the superfluity of transmedial influences was only to be expected and my own notes are testament to the cross-medial discourse within rehearsals that sought inspiration from a myriad of sources and arguably rooted the piece more substantially in a filmic rather than a theatrical tradition, in the mould of the 'theatricalised film' as discussed previously. Both Pete and Andrew made

constant reference to film and visual examples throughout rehearsals and most of the specific notes to the actors were underpinned with a filmic aesthetic. A sample of my observations just from the first day that I witnessed in March 2010 reveals the transmedial emphases. Pete suggests that they “Think of it as a dream of a French film” then shortly after directs one female performer to “Imagine yourself as Jeanne Moreau, be like a French actress.” To another female actor he reflects that “I imagined her, this character, as a young Sophia Loren, washing clothes” and constantly talks about “walking into shot” to all the performers. At one stage, Andrew turns to Pete, and wistfully recalls that “We grew up on those films didn’t we Pete?” Perhaps it may be suggested that this is a brief window into the enculturated intermediality that infuses their practice, as their performance ‘vehicle’ is the stage but their experiential library is predominated with the filmic. The two simply fuse in the rehearsal moment.

The actors likewise adopt this transmedial attitude and absorb a filmic aesthetic into their observations and self-reflection on role. Adam, in one interjection states that he wants it to be “French-esque with surtitles”. In their rehearsal on stage, as alluded to earlier, they not only assimilate filmic personae into their work but also the modalities of film. Space is reconfigured as shots are constructed in discontinuous space. Adam, for example, delivers a line directly out to the audience but the ‘recipient’ of that line responds to it further off on stage left as if they are operating within a cinematic virtual space. Andrew refers to this technique, and intimates that it took some time to master (possibly for the Greek actors), in an interview with the *Yorkshire Evening Post* from 11th March 2010. He stated:

‘...sometimes the actors may face forwards, even if they're addressing the person next to them and their natural inclination, obviously, is to turn and face the person in question. But they've managed to overcome that now, thankfully.’ In this discontiguous, transmedial mode of working we are asked to constitute the edit and reconstitute the space in our own minds-eye.

Throughout the whole rehearsal period the dominant reference is film augmented with related stimuli, particularly from French visual culture. There is an overt homage to the photographs of Pierre et Gilles (and subsequently Jean Paul Gaultier) in the creation of the *mise en scène*, particularly the fashioning of the sailors in terms of their costume and physical positioning within the frames (see Fig. 5). There are minimal theatrical

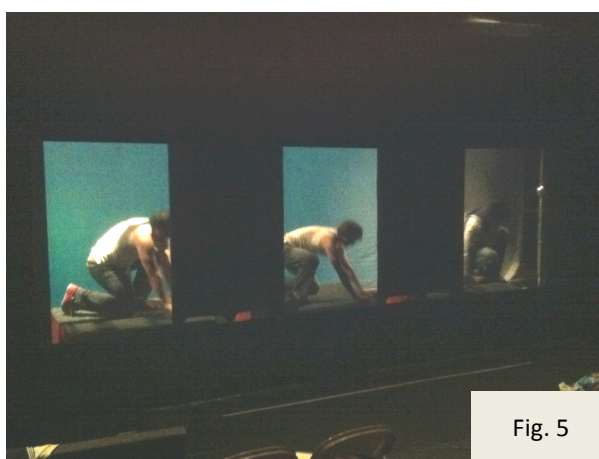


Fig. 5

exemplars used by the directors and a complete absence of what would be regarded as recognisable acting methodologies. The directorial language of the rehearsal room continues to be predominantly filmic as actors are asked to consider the frame they are in which is a reference to the set but also to the conceptual film frame. Script notes directly refer to this with directions such as ‘sailors walk out of frame’. The word ‘cut’ is also used many times to conclude a scene or to explain how two moments will connect. In this sense the work is created as a montage or collage. The focus is on the construction of the visual scene, a mood or dreamscape akin to the

landscapes of Gertrude Stein or the dream-images of Deleuze into which the actors are placed as part of the *techno en scène*.

Constructivist pedagogy in a remediative and transmediative environment

As the nature of remediation and transmediation reveal themselves, parallels with and potential applications of constructivist pedagogy become apparent. The conscious connection between past and present and the acknowledgement and celebration that our present creativity is rooted in existing mediated processes correlates with the basic tenets of constructivism. Lev Vygotsky, one of the leading constructivist theorists wrote:

... everything the imagination creates is always based on elements taken from reality, from a person's previous experience. It would be a miracle indeed if imagination could create something out of nothing or if it had other sources than past experience for its creations. (2004: 13)

Vygotsky is keen to point out the symbiotic relationship between reality and our imagination. Citing the fairytales of Pushkin he identifies how every fantastical vision in the stories can be traced back to an existing experience in life and it is actually the combination of elements that makes them fantastical. (2004: 14) He proposes therefore that the richness of our imagination and our capacity to imagine is

predicated on the richness of our lived experience and the implication for education he suggests is that we, as educators, should broaden the experiential realm of learners as widely as possible. At this point critics of constructivism, such as Eric D. Hirsch (1987, 2006) may highlight the dependence on the variety and quality of the lived experience but this is where an embrace of enculturated intermediality is significant in that it values the diversity of cultural experience and the range of real and virtual environments that we inhabit, often simultaneously. Unlike the prescriptive 'cultural literacy' proposed by Hirsch (1987) which demarcated the cultural knowledge deemed relevant for children and young adults to semiotically decode educational texts, a constructivist paradigm conscious of enculturated intermediality circumvents the cultural gatekeepers and permits students and educators to access and utilise the non canonical knowledge built from contemporary experience. Huey-Ling Fan and Michael Orey, citing Vygotsky and Bruner, underline the potential of students' own mediatised experiences within constructivist arts pedagogy:

... for learning to occur, students must become active participants rather than passive recipients, taking more responsibility for their own learning. Intentional efforts must be made by the students to "internalize" information and make sense out of it (Vygotsky, 1978). Bruner (1961) suggested that "material that is organized in terms of a person's own interests and cognitive structures is material

that has the best chance of being accessible in memory” (p. 32). (2002: 60)

Writing further on the relationship between imagination and reality Vygotsky foregrounds the importance of social experience learnt from others. (2004: 17) Not only do we draw upon our own knowledge but learn from and construct new knowledge from the experiences of others. Again this correlates with remediation and transmediation as both concepts are anti-hierarchical and remind us that borders between media and creative processes are permeable. The ‘respect and rivalry’ of remediation disrupts notions of authorial singularity and emphasises the rhizomatic nature (see later analysis) of how ideas exchange. In *imitating the dog’s* work, whilst there were certain canonical texts referenced, most of the source material was from everyday experience or popular culture. As Andrew Quick was happy to admit on more than one occasion in rehearsals: “I should have been a director of bad pop videos.”

Furthermore Vygotsky suggests that imagination becomes fixed as a new reality through its materialization in a creative form. This ‘crystallized imagination’ (2004: 20) is particularly pertinent to intermedial phenomena as in discreet theatrical or filmic media it is increasingly difficult to create forms that are new or surprising in terms of their modal structure. We are accustomed to the modalities and qualifying aspects of both media and with the ubiquity of computer generated imagery we are saturated with diverse images within the qualified media of film, television or the internet. I would argue that cine-theatrical intermediality, in its juxtaposition of live

and digital media, can make strange our relationship to them once again and give us a new perspective on each media and our live presence alongside or immersed within the filmic or televisual realm. Something new if uncertain is now present for our imagination to conceive. Liesabeth Groot Nibberlink and Sigrid Merx refer to this intermedial sensation as a 'not knowing.' (2010: 219)

... the spectator does not know what she sees, what she hears, what she feels, where she is or what is what. She is only very much aware of the fact that she is seeing, hearing and, feeling; that she is present. One might want to characterize this not knowing as being overwhelmed and confused by an excess of conflicting signifiers and sensations.

(ibid)

I also would extend this state of 'not knowing' to include the performers (or learners) engaging with the piece. It is possible in this paradigm to see ourselves (performer and/or spectator)³⁶ as *both* central and vulnerable. We are at the heart of the discourse and yet aware that this is an immersive (sometimes overwhelming) experience over which we may only have partial control. This does not necessarily diminish our sense of agency however, but rather make us conscious of the web that we are connected to.

³⁶ It is worth noting that these roles of performer/spectator may both be interwoven into the students' experiences and they may engage with them simultaneously or in combination during a creative process.

The Dilemma of the Body as Intermedium

It is in this context that I revisit the notion of the body as an intermedium; infused with a complex and ever adaptable set of modalities and informed and affected by a rich enculturated understanding of contextually and operationally qualified aspects from across the media spectrum. I propose that we as intermedia can both access and interpret a plethora of external media discourses *and* inhabit these media fusions within our own engagement within the world. We are simultaneously *within and without*. We draw upon multiple sources and can absorb and adapt these in a myriad of fashions. Whilst we are not all 'digital natives' we are all intermedial natives, born into and conversant with our own matrices of mediality. In this regard we may compare this intermedial conception of the body to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's term *rhizome*, which they developed within their two-volume treatise *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* and specifically within the second study *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980, 1987).

For Deleuze and Guattari the rhizome is a non-hierarchical conception of society and culture in which there are ceaseless and countless connections made between semiotic systems. The origin or genesis of culture cannot be distilled into linear, fixed narratives and is constructed of fluid assemblages that are constantly reconfiguring their meaning. Echoing the iterations of intermediality itself as described in previous chapters, they state that the rhizome 'has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo.' (1987: 25) Deleuze and Guattari contested that society is made up of multiple rhizomes with their own webs of structures and significances and in the constant overlapping of these systems a

process of *detritorialisation* and *reterritorialisation* occurs. (1987: 9) Structures of a rhizome may splinter in this intersection but at the same moment reconfigure themselves into a new rhizome. In this description there are clear echoes of medial definition as constructed by Elleström and the intermedial notion of ‘mutual affect’. The media of film and theatre with their modalities and qualifying aspects can be looked upon as rhizomes and in so doing we become more alert to their permeable borders and the capacity for their intersection to create something anew. Likewise, the human ‘being in the world’ may be seen as a distinct rhizome as well as part of many wider cultural rhizomes.

So let us consider the body as intermedium within the context of *imitating the dog’s* productions. What is the experience of the performers within the work as they engage in remediative and transmediative practices and what is the nature of their agency and authorship over the work? What pedagogical challenges and opportunities are presented through the conception of ourselves as intermedia?

The language and practice of *imitating the dog’s* rehearsal room initially appear to tell a story of artifice and performer subservience. In reviewing my own journal I note how early in the observations I suggest that ‘... the physicality on stage is very conscious – staged and posed across the horizontal frame.’ This is partially due to what I, in my notes, cinematically referred to as ‘the very shallow depth of field’ created by the frames and the close proximity of the actors to the front of them. Questions arising from this follow on shortly as I watch Adam and the Greek actors moving from one directorially requested pose to another across the frames, between or within which there is little or no physical interaction. In my notes I ask

myself: 'How are these actors performing together? What is their on stage relationship within the proxemic?' Pete in his feedback to the actors confirms the need for this disconnection when he states that: "... the actors need to think about the frames as photos, not joined or connected." (March 2010)

On a regular basis I find comments in my notes about how the actors seemed divorced from the piece. For example on the second day of the first set of observations in March 2010 I write: 'The actors are never emotionally engaged in the rehearsal – it is a technical exercise in which the artistic alchemy is perceived / imagined by the directors.' A few days later I note that: 'The actor still seems extraneous. Actor questions are seeking answers, not ownership.' This last comment is not a direct criticism but suggests that ownership has not been considered so what is left is clarification of what is required by others. I often observe what I believe are the **consequences of this** as when the actors are occasionally asked their own opinion on their role they seem to find it hard to adjust and self reflect. One of the Greek actors seems surprised for example when asked if she has any brothers or sisters and if the notion of caring for a sibling could inform her role. John, one of the performers from the 2011 tour affirms some of my initial thoughts when in our interview he stated that: "You don't need to be emotional for this kind of role. It's technical. Am I in the right place? Am I making the right image? Anyone could be in this. Actors can be replaced by someone else. You can't be too emotional as the lines are not emotional. In the fight scene the lines are not emotional." (May 2011)

Viewed from this perspective it could be argued that the actors in this performance

fulfil an almost pro-filmic³⁷ role, objects in front of a lens, waiting to be filmed. Objects as opposed to characters or as opposed to human beings with control over their creativity.

The directorial decision to utilise purely digitized sound rather than any live voices also creates a certain distance between actors and roles. The actors, particularly the Greek and Cypriots, do not understand the majority of the text and there is no significant discussion to clarify what is being voiced and how this should be embodied. In my own observation notes I reflect that this choice of French lip-sync creates a double layer of alienation, as it is neither the actor's voice *nor* their language. This then potentially makes it difficult to make informed choices about appropriate gesture or movement on stage. In March 2010 I wrote: 'Its intonation and cultural significance is twice removed – so to perform it requires stereotype, projection or guesstimation of its performative quality.' It fixes the performance in a single mould as Leo, one of the performers brought in for the 2011 tour intimates: "If there was a live French voice off stage they could respond to us but *it's* not. The lines are pre-recorded." Ownership of the voice, one of the central loci of agency for performers, is dislocated from the actors and depersonalized. Anna, one of the performers in the 2011 tour observed that: "It's weird having the voice of someone else. When you know what they look like and they don't look like me. You feel distanced." This dislocation between performer and their emotional control over their vocal role is perhaps best summated in an occasion when one of the female

³⁷ Pro-filmic space: The area in front of the camera's recording field.

Greek actors asks the directors if the crucial orgasmic moment of a scene could be vocalized live but is simply told: “No, it will be recorded.”

It would seem then from this first glance at my observations that the capacity for a performer to be an intermedium, capable of absorbing and conducting diverse media discourses may actually leave us vulnerable to the remediative rivalries and appropriations alluded to by Bolter and Grusin. Like any other medium we are potentially repurposed or absorbed into more potent or dominant media. We may now be completely digitised as in 1927's *The Animals and Children Took to the Streets* or partially as evident in the lip-sync style within *imitating the dog's* work. Due to our enculturated intermediality we can accommodate ourselves alongside a range of technical and qualified media and transmedially engage with the modalities of other media in adaptations of our bodies and in our interpersonal relationships on stage and within the creative team. This capacity to accommodate is a great strength but is also a challenge as we potentially ‘disappear’ into a *techno en scène* with little or no distinction between ourselves and any other medial element. The reviews of *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls* reflect these tensions as they often commented on the perceived lack of embodiment or agency within the roles. One online reviewer wrote:

It's difficult to assess the acting performances by Dimitris Kartokis, Nikoleta Kotsailidou, Myrto Koygiali, Poxini Savva, Adam Nash, and Simon Wainwright because what we were given was miming, tableaux and posturing. In that they were effective but the joy of live theatre is in experiencing actors

deliver lines, express emotion and connect with their audience and there was scope for at least some portions of the piece to be presented in more conventional fashion. Suppose you took the soundtrack of a French B-movie, had a group of actors crudely mime to it behind a giant mosquito screen, added some synthesised strings, and projected subtitles at the same time. That is pretty much what we were given here from a company who seemed so keen to distance themselves from the audience that they even took their final bows behind the screen. (Pointer 2010)

It may indeed seem then that Moholy-Nagy was prescient in his view that technology and machines could out perform or obfuscate the actions of human beings. Matthew A. Killmeier, referencing Merleau-Ponty's work, reflects on the vulnerabilities of the body as a medium when he writes:

In an elementary sense, any medium that facilitates the separation of communicants or the body-subject from direct intercourse with its world disembodies communication. As the body is a medium, the elimination of its full presence disembodies. (2009: 37)

In the invention of the photographic medium or the development of cine-theatricality we have created opportunities to (re)present but also disembody ourselves from our immediate experiences. Certainly in *imitating the dog's* productions and on this evidence of Pointer's remarks it could be argued that

technology has subsumed the human being or deluged it beyond recognition. Pedagogically this raises some serious questions about how such work may be explored within an educational framework. How may we respond to what appears to be a passive, medially receptive status for the performers and an auteur status for the directors between whom dialogue seems merely to be for clarification rather than creativity? What learning can be engaged in when the situation the teachers and learners are in is seemingly didactic and static? As rhizomatic beings, are we in danger of falling ‘between things’; ‘interbeings’ that can slip between the cracks to the point where our sense of self and agency is lost?

Reconsidering intermedial agency

Perhaps then it is time to re-perceive this work. It is all too easy in intermedial practice to focus on the ‘in-between’ as an absence of something, a void rather than a creative space. This was neatly summated in my interview with Freda Chapple when she recalled that in the early period of IFTR³⁸ research on intermediality the group “frankly described themselves as the corridor people.” (Oct. 2010) When film intersects with live theatrical performance there is, as previously identified, a tendency to be alarmed by film’s seemingly pervasive remedial effect. Greg Gieseckam, for example, begins *Staging the Screen* (2007) by citing Mark Lawson’s concerns that he aired in a review of recent intermedial work in London.

³⁸ IFTR - International Federation for Theatre Research.

Arguing that performance gains its power from the fact that it 'is created as we watch' and identifying this with the notion of 'liveness', he concluded apocalyptically, 'recent British theatre has suggested not so much a co-existence between stage and screen as the old red velvet theatre curtains being flapped in surrender.' (1)

The reaction of the reviewers often centres on their perception that the theatre directors in question should go and make films instead as this is what they seem (in the reviewers mind) to prefer. This is typified in the curt final comment made by Quentin Letts in his Daily Mail review of Katie Mitchell's *some trace of her* (2008) when he wrote: 'As for Katie Mitchell, why doesn't she just go and make films? They obviously interest her more than the stage does.' (2008) As suggested earlier this is a concern that reoccurs in reviews of *imitating the dog's* work as well as that of Lepage. It was also raised by Greg Giesekam himself in my interview with him as he reflected that, after seeing the company *Cinema Teatro* at the Edinburgh Fringe: "I was thinking why don't you just go and make a bloody film ... why are you bothering to do this because you have drained these performers of the opportunity to be live actors working with the stuff." (Dec. 2010) It is even a note I made myself, although with less vitriol or ire, when watching *imitating the dog's* rehearsals.

Whilst these perspectives are valid reactions to individual performances and may offer lucid admonitions to companies relying too heavily on filmic media as pure spectacle they should not lead us to believe that cine-theatrical intermediality is by default a suffocating relationship in which the dictates of film overrule the nuances

of theatre. Theatre, as highlighted in previous chapters, is a robust hypermedium and, in the right circumstances, capable of creating uniquely intermedial experiences. Also, particularly in more recent theorisations there has been an emphasis on the 'mutual affect' between media and the significance of reciprocal modal interplay as identified by Elleström. So having repelled the notion that theatre is under terminal threat, at least for now, it is opportune to consider what film can actually bring to this confluence of media and how theatre may respond to it as a co-creator of meaning rather than submissive partner. In so doing we may identify where agency lies in the creative and performance processes and how we may re-conceive this model as productive pedagogical practice. This inquiry must however be mindful of the critics view and the challenges and concerns that my initial reflections on the rehearsal processes of *imitating the dog* allude to. A productive pedagogy must not be blinkered and the complexity of the negotiation between media and the potential compromises to be made alongside the opportunities must be considered.

To respond to this enquiry I propose a return to notions of time and space and therein the theoretical propositions of Gilles Deleuze in conjunction with the phenomenological conceptions of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. My contention is that by reconsidering the temporal and spatial dimensionality of film and cine-theatrical intermediality we may recognise new potentiality for seeing our capabilities and ourselves within the world. Film, as suggested earlier in **Cinema: reflections on filmic ontology and phenomenology**, offers a distinct way of experiencing and reflecting upon life and, whilst it shares modalities and qualifying

aspects with live theatre and other media, affords us unique opportunities to reflect on the nature of our agency. When allied to theatre in intermedial practice this then creates potentially dynamic juxtapositions between our natural and secondary (or virtual) perspectives. What then do we find if we embrace rather than resist a filmic lens in consideration of the rehearsal process of *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls*?

Relinquishing the present in search of agency

Reflection on time is fundamental to undergraduate arts pedagogy as it informs our notions of self and how we articulate ourselves in the world. Considering how we exist in time and how our decisions and feelings are informed by time is central to understanding what we may mean by 'having agency'. In this context I would wish to propose the following perspective: *We live through the present (this current moment) but its significance is to be found in its implications and repercussions, the past and the future as expressed in our memories and our aspirations.* As Christopher Vitale suggested: 'The virtual past/future infused into the actual is what produces freedom from being enslaved to the moment.' (2011)

As envisaged by phenomenologists alongside Bergson and Deleuze, time is an enfolding process in which the present is interwoven by past and future. The present, as I will argue, is almost intangible yet intermediality offers us a mode of experiencing **this fragile state**. Time in cine-theatrical intermedial practice has the potential to manifest itself in forms beyond the capacity of 'live' theatre. In the integration of film we are able to 'capture' time and consider its ephemerality and its

conceptual constitution. Performance makers and theorists have become evermore alert to this potential as digital technologies have advanced and allowed us to manipulate filmic images and film speeds. Steve Dixon, citing Jean-François Lyotard and Heidegger, writes:

Lyotard, like Heidegger before him, notes the cruel paradox of time whereby the present, in continual motion, can never be finally tangible or held: 'As the representing present is absolute, it is not graspable: it is neither *not yet* present, or *no longer* present. It is always too early or too late to perceive the representation itself' [original emphases] (quoted in Tholen 2001: 56). *Film* attempts a digital compromise to hint at least at a theatrical squaring of the circle of time, to enable the audience to *grasp*, if only as an electronic visual image, the climactic dramatic moments passing through the continuous present. (2005: 26)

Returning to Deleuze's ideas we are immediately reminded that to view the world in front of us cinematically is not an affectation or temporary media specific lens but a fundamental mode of experiencing and knowing. We edit our 'imaging' of the world and cut from one view to another so we are always 'doing cinema' as Vitale suggests. (2011) Not only that but filmic perception within theatre may be recognised as a reassertion of the individual's enculturated perspective that wrestles control away from and deterritorialises the canonical structures of western theatre.

Theatrical knowledge in the wider Lepagean sense comes to the fore in a rhizomatic framework devoid of (or shall we at least say more sparsely populated with) cultural gatekeepers. The 'lived-body' experience as proposed by Merleau-Ponty takes precedence over a received experience interpreted for us by others. Film in its confluence with live performance engenders a heterogeneity of influences that challenges the homogeneity of theatrical tradition and the way that embodiment, time and space are perceived. The experience of "what we grew up on" to cite Andrew Quick begins to have greater validity.

Film, as Stanley Cavell reminds us, is not of the present. (1979) The image that appears to be so immediate is temporally disconnected from us; we have the illusion of immediacy in which time has been spatialised between the screen and ourselves. Therefore the present, in film and intermedial cine-theatrical practice, is not necessarily the moment to focus upon or at least not as a singularity. In live theatre we are often wedded to the notion that we are in the 'moment' as prioritisation is given to the 'liveness' of the event. However as Philip Auslander (1999) has suggested, 'liveness' becomes a slippery concept in contemporary theatre and so to respond to this I turn to the conceptions of time and movement proffered by Deleuze and phenomenological and constructivist theorists to articulate the potential of 'being' in this hybrid mode of practice.

Both Deleuze and phenomenology assert that our own being and the phenomena that we experience are constantly in flux and are complex discourses built upon past, present and future. Paula Marrati reminds us that the Deleuzian time-image is a temporally enveloping entity that is 'never in the present, but it always has a

temporal density: it is possessed by a past and a future that haunt it and that in no way coincide with the actual images that precede and follow it. The image thus has a "before" and an "after" that co-exist with its present.' (2008: 68) From a phenomenological perspective Hubert Dreyfus, in conversation with Bryan Magee in 1987, affirmed the significance that Heidegger placed upon the interweaving of past, present and future. Our *Dasein* or *being-in-the-world* as Heidegger refers to it is an interconnection of *background significance* (contextual, historical knowledge akin to the recognition and recollection images of Deleuze), the *present moment* in which our 'mood' disposes us towards a certain action and our future rationale; we are doing this 'for the sake of' some future prospects. He uses Heidegger's example of hammering to make his case. In other words hammering would only be undertaken if we had some lived background experience of hammering's purpose to build, renovate and so forth. This informs my mood to hammer and the manner in which I articulate it spatially and temporally in the present. The hammering is always however simultaneously in the future as I am doing it for the sake of something in the future. I have, to use Husserl's term, an *intentionality* or consciousness of the next moment and some latent consciousness of what the hammering will achieve in time. Without this combination the hammering cannot occur or would be in a purposeless and uncoordinated vacuum. In this sense Heidegger and later Merleau-Ponty contested that we may perceive time as continually being constituted and therefore never fully constituted. (Merleau-Ponty 2002: 482) Eric Matthews, writing on Merleau-Ponty, underlines this perspective when he states:

One's situation in the present is what it is because of what it has become, that is, because of the past (including one's own past); one's actions to change it will be completed in the future; and the succession of past, present and future is what gives unity and direction to one's life. (2006: 100)

To develop this one stage further it may be argued, if we foreground the phenomenological concept of apperception, that the present is the temporality of which we have least consciousness. Husserl originally developed a phenomenological reading of the term apperception but the central premise recurs in the notion of 'body schema' as envisaged by Merleau-Ponty. Allan Casebier, summing Husserl's view, writes: 'When a perceiver apperceives, he or she "lives through" or "passes through" the sensa (or other object) without making them objects of perception.' (1991: 13) We perceive the world through the present moment and the phenomena in front of us, but our interpretation of it is always being constituted by our enculturated past and in light of our future intentions. To use the paradigm of the Deleuzian time-image we are potentially less aware of the actual present and more aware of the virtual past and future.

As indicated in **Intermedial pedagogy: a work in progress**, our sense of agency (SA2) as a 'higher-order, reflective phenomenon' (Gallagher 2012: 18) is significantly built upon '...a sense of one's capacity for action over time, and a form of self-narrative where one's past actions and projected future actions are given a general coherence...' (Pacherie 2007: 6 in Gallagher 2012: 26) Cine-theatricality begins to reveal the nature of this agency through time, phenomenalisng it in front of us and,

as will be explored in the next section, drawing attention to the fragile composition of our self in the world.

Time at the 'Bar': learning in fragile and transitory modes

In *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls*, *imitating the dog* create an environment in which time and space uncouple themselves from chronological time and Euclidean spatial dimensions and instead present us with a dreamlike composition, such as in the opening sequence as described earlier, that phenomenalizes and hence indicates our conceptual relationship to the world; our 'being' as time to cite Heidegger.

Remediation and transmediation in the context of their work are a valorisation of the enfolding of time and a material expression of Deleuze's conception of 'becoming'. (1987) By this I mean the overt theatrical embrace of previously conceived media narratives, modalities and qualifying aspects can be seen as an expression of time and movement in flux; not only what has been but also what is becoming. Media forms in transition become metaphors for our own lived experiences through time, as Bhaba noted: 'We find ourselves in the moment of transit.' (2004: 1) Andy Lavender, reflecting on the work of anthropologist Marc Augé, considers how intermedial work may phenomenalise this notion of human transition. He writes:

Transit then, is not so much a question of passing from one place to another in pure directional journeying. It is as likely to suggest a *circumstance* that is both situated and dis-

located, a state of impermanence that is nonetheless phenomenally distinct. Such a state seems particularly apt to a digital, network culture, in which entities can be simultaneously centred and unfixed. (2012: 142)

In this reflection is the essence of *pedagogy of fragility*, which is epitomized within *imitating the dog's* practice. We are both grounded *and* in suspension, real and virtual. Such a perspective resonates with Ernst von Glasersfeld's constructivist conception of temporal and spatial 'parallelism' (1994) in which we simultaneously exist in real, linear time and space but also in conceptual 'proto-time' and 'proto-space', holding on to our 'repository' of memories and knowledge through which we can experience and frame our understanding of the world. This real/virtual parallel existence materializes itself within *imitating the dog's* work as the layers of media reveal the multiple and simultaneous nature of our 'being in time'.

Within the rehearsal process and performance of *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls* what we are arguably witnessing is an articulation of the 'imaging of time' and the simultaneity of temporality as past, present and future are conceptually and spatially phenomenalized in front of us or by us as an audience. This may be appreciated if we recall Monica Alcazer's explanation of the projection and place it in intermedial connection with the live actor. As she stated, the images at the back are a constant reflection of memory but also connote the future of the young sailor embodied on stage by Adam Nash who's present dilemma expressed in his own performance and in the front projection of his psychological state is bound up with our awareness of his future guilt on his death bed. Adam in his performance exists in this hinterland

where his own actions contribute to this phenomenalization of conceptual time. Initially this idea of a contribution rather than a complete control over the characterisation may seem to reduce the agency of the performer but Adam's reaction to being placed in such a situation in *imitating the dog's* work does not suggest this. When interviewed he remarked:

I think a lot of traditional theatre is about having sympathy with the character, a connection, so you're very close to the character, you're with them, not just the character but also the journey of the actor playing the character and you're all in this whole thing and we're totally not about that, we're very distanced. Using *Kellerman* again as an example, the characters are not that important I don't think. It's the whole world; it's a whole look. (March 2010)

Whilst it is important to remember John's perception of role as unemotional it is worth noting that several of the actors who had worked closely with the company for years had more affinity with the methodology and less of a sense of dislocation. In conversation with Adam and other performers there was a definite impression that whilst they acknowledged the constraints placed upon them by the technological framework this did not diminish their responsibility or their significance in role. During a break in rehearsals in May 2011 I talked to Laura, Morven and Leo who all expressed a clear sense of ownership and agency over their recent *imitating the dog* work:

Laura – You have to give an emotional performance. Andrew once said in a post-show discussion that the actors are just undertaking a technical process and that makes me cross.

Morven – She gets really angry at that. I've just done a naturalistic play and it was a real work out. But you had to really act in *Hotel Methuselah* as the first rows could see you.

Anna – I really like the technical elements. I get involved in them. It is satisfying.

Leo – It's like being sculpted putting moments together for that split second when it comes together. Like a sculptor who puts sticks into sand for that one moment when the shadow hits them and casts the shadow of a hand. (May 2011)

In May 2011 my own notes reflect my emerging consideration of how role in this performance needs to be considered. I wrote: 'The body cannot encapsulate it on its own – it cannot be embodied. It is an exoskeleton.' This is a term that I find myself using throughout all of my observational notes and one that I will return to again in the study of Lepage. By exoskeleton I am referring to the notion that the performer is now engaged in a creation of role that cannot be expressed fully within, to extend the anatomical analogy, the endoskeleton of the individual or indeed the ensemble of physical bodies. In such intermedial work the creation of role is the 'mediaphoric' confluence of body, digital presence and the metaphor that is created by it. (Pluta 2010) The presence of film within the theatrical hypermedium, both technically in

terms of the projection, soundtrack and lip-sync *and* transmedially in terms of the actors performances does not appear to have suffocated the performers but created a deterritorialisation in which there is a liberation created through the confluence of media. Gay MacAuley noted that film actors 'do not create a totality as do stage actors ... The totality comes not from the actors' performances but what is done with those performances.' (1987: 10) However, the experienced actors within *imitating the dog* embrace this absence of totality or intermezzo and find their purpose in structuring the collage. There is a realisation that it requires an intensity of performance within the *techno en scène* but also an acceptance that the work only fully realises itself in the final moment of intermediality that is then interpreted by the ensemble that is the audience, or, to ground it in educational terms, a collective group of reflective learners. Their interaction is not in the contiguous space and time of live performance but between the temporal and spatial layers of the diverse media of which they are but one element. Their work offers us a spatialisation of time, an image of ourselves being in time, where the simultaneity of past, present and future materialise themselves on stage. What is, in normal everyday experience, an intrapersonal process for us, phenomenizes itself in front of us. The composer for the company Piotr Woycicki also writes specifically about their work and identifies their phenomenisation of space and time as fundamental to their performances. He cites Hans Thies Lehmann, who when writing about Robert Wilson's work stated:

... the space of this theatre is [...] discontinuous: light and colours, disparate signs and objects create a stage that no

longer signifies a homogenous space [...] the actions taking place in different depths of the stage can either be synthesized by the spectator or be read as 'parallelograms'.

(Lehmann 2006: 79 in Woycicki 2011: 27)

Woycicki is highlighting the layered nature of their work and it is worth noting Lehmann's reference to parallel readings of performance, echoing von Glasersfeld. In intermedial theatre such as *imitating the dog's* practice the layers of time and space can be interwoven or read as discreet phenomena. It is also worth citing Lehmann from slightly earlier in the original passage when he writes: 'The actors sharing the stage often do not even enter into the context of an interaction of any kind.' (2006: 79) This may remind us that in Wilson or *imitating the dog's* work it is the exoskeleton of media elements that creates the ensemble.

In light of these reflections we may reconsider what it means to be situated in this creative process or in the performance moment and how we may reflect on what we experience and what we have agency over. Paradoxically I would argue that the agency reveals itself in an acceptance and embrace of the fragility of the temporality and spatialisation. Such work recognises that we are interwoven into a complex rhizomatic web and that our modern, enculturated 'body schema' projects us out into the world which makes us both agents of change but also open to change and mutation. As intermedia we are ourselves open to 'mutual affect', not in literal terms, but in how the combination of media are newly perceived in the intermedial domain. To focus on the body specifically, such work creates a realisation of what Woycicki refers to as our 'perceptual limitations' (2011: 33) as our everyday

experience and apperception of the world curtails our awareness of how time and space interact. Simultaneously however, the intermedial frame awakens an awareness of conceptual time and space, as it is able to juxtapose our everyday perception with conceptual perception.

Paradoxically Henri Bergson (who inspired Deleuze) and Martin Heidegger both mistrusted technology's capacity to enhance the arts and heighten our perception of our presence in time and space. Heidegger noted his own concerns about this technological impact when he referred to 'the end of distance' or 'de-distancing' as Grant Kein identifies in *Phenomenology and Technography* (2005). Inherent in this notion is a sense of evaporation between the external world and ourselves so that our ability to perceive what we perceive (the perception-image) is beyond us. However, I would contest that **intermediality** directly responds and counters this as it makes strange our relationship to the world and phenomenalisises our real and virtual/proto lives which are always enfolded into the present but not always recognised as such. In experiencing such work in the rehearsal room or in performance as artist or audience member we exist within an extra-temporal world. Steve Dixon writes:

... the juxtaposition of different 'simultaneous' temporalities (live and recorded/computer-rendered) can complicate the audience's perceptions of time and space to the extent that rather than simply 'suspending disbelief' and experiencing performance time according to traditional passive protocols

of live theatre, a different perception of extra-temporality
can be experienced. (2005: 20)

Woycicki recognises this 'extra' nature of time in *imitating the dog's* work. From *Kellerman* he cites an example of when the nurses are seen in profile in the live space but filmicly shown from behind on the screens simultaneously. This illusion potentially connotes Kellerman's schizophrenia as we are never sure what is real or imagined but also its double temporal image affords a new reading of time. He writes:

Thus, the intermedial dimension of *Kellerman* with its
ambiguous entrapment of the live action reinforces the
narrative ambiguity but also suggests a temporality that is
essentially extraneous to both theatre and film, a temporality
beyond the fictitious time of film and our experience of the
theatrical here and now. (2011: 33)

This new temporality and sense of being in the world enables us to construct a new awareness of our fragility that is itself a liberating rather than a fragile notion. The centrality of the body as *the* locus for significance becomes uncertain. Our permeability and vulnerability are fore-grounded. Nibberlink and Merx are clear that this is a productive reflection of the 'chaos that surrounds us' and that intermedial performances 'invite the spectator to work through these unstable sensual experiences to become aware of precisely this instability of the reality we live in and to deal with the fact that we don't know.' (2010: 220) Citing the work of Susan Buck-Morss they argue that intermediality creates a new type of 'knowing' that awakens

our senses (ibid). Buck-Morss contests that our modern industrial and mediatized lives have deadened our senses and created a condition of anaesthesia and a 'crisis of perception' that requires a perceptual restoration. (1992: 11) We may make connections here with Husserl's contention that we should, through phenomenological reduction, become aware again of the 'essence' of experience and Deleuze's assertion that the perception-image reawakens our awareness of self within the world. Nibbelink and Merx conclude their analysis of this contemporary anaesthesia and how we may respond to it by stating that: 'We believe that intermedial performances might have such a restorative potential.' (2010: 264)

This is also a retort to the critics and my own concerns that work such as *imitating the dog's* might as well become purely filmic, as the place of the physical body is paradoxically paramount in signifying its own susceptibility. I asked Andrew and Adam why their work needed to be an intermedial construction of live and recorded as opposed to just film which is clearly central to their aesthetic. Adam interestingly distinguished the significance of the live body situated in the space, not in its control of the environment, but in the glitches that it creates. He stated:

What's interesting for us in when you put it in the live space, is it possible to drag the audience into believing something, but when an actor doesn't quite get a line right or gets the lip-sync wrong and then the audience sees these little crashes and you think 'Oh My God' we are still in the live space, we are still in the theatre, we're not watching a film. (March 2010)

In this intermedial blend the human presence is central in its capacity to be imperfect. The fixed sequentiality of film is juxtaposed or critically disrupted by the live actors who may have to conform to the constraints of the filmic medium but nevertheless are present within the experience and have the potential to deviate, disrupt or merely forget. It may be argued that their very presence within the intermedial maelstrom makes us conscious of the highly mediated and rhizomatic environment in which we exist and sometimes are not aware of or apperceive through it. Roberts Blossom in 1966 referred to the mixing in one space of 'the unconscious (recorded) with the conscious (present)' as 'dangerous mystical play' but enthusiastically noted that within this fluid domain: 'Our presence as bodies begins to be suspect, our presence as consciousness more real.' (1966: 71-72)

The challenge of fragility

I am conscious that within these propositions of the performer/learner as a fragile body, forever in a state of 'becoming', there are both the advantages that I have considered thus far but also certain difficulties which cannot be ignored in a reflection on pedagogical potential. In particular I would draw attention to two areas of concern. Firstly the difficulties that arise from accessing and managing the complex web of rhizomatic knowledge that intermediality feeds upon and secondly the problems of being an intermedium as alluded to earlier in the chapter.

At the end of my last set of observation notes in May 2011 I wrote 'They seem at the edge of knowledge all the time.' Reflecting on the pedagogical potential of remediated and transmediated intermediality I would assert the need to consider

the implications for such a fragile, liminal experience that places us at a rhizomatic edge of knowledge where we constantly must accept a deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation of what we know. In the earlier chapter **Theatre as Hypermedium** I considered the status and agency of the actor in cine-theatrical intermedial practice and reflected on the vulnerability this may create. Now I would propose that this challenge is compounded when the artistic context of the work in which the performer is situated demands an ever expanding knowledge of diverse media cultures. Whilst I have already recognised that many of the influences on the work are from popular culture, it may also be argued that *imitating the dog* have their own canonical texts that they revere; French noir and new wave films to name but two. In light of this I asked the performers about their knowledge of these genres and Laura succinctly replied: “I don’t go around watching French films.” (2011) The sentiment of this comment was echoed by several other performers.

I am mindful as I write at this stage of the multitude of perspectives that have been drawn upon up thus far in order to articulate my understanding of cine-theatrical intermediality, including the ontologies of film and theatre which are distinct *and* intertwined. Beyond these frames of reference also lie intermedial theory and all its *both/and* tributaries. From a practitioner point of view, in the case of *imitating the dog*, there is no noticeable delimitation on their sources of inspiration. It spans historical knowledge of novels and 20th century film alongside contemporary internet material and beyond. I suggest in my observations that: ‘The internet is the creative source. Inspiration is outsourced to the virtual world. It is disconnected artistry.’ On reflection this is an unfair simplification but in part an honest

perspective on how rehearsals felt at the time. The 'digital literacies' (Barney and Gordon 2005) of the younger generation are wrestled with in *imitating the dog's* rehearsal room and the speed and ability to 'surf' the material online sometimes seems to be the deciding factor in what the next idea will be. The following sample from my notes, reflecting the events of only one hour on May 10th 2011, offers a flavour of the sporadic and eclectic nature of the search for inspiration:

They watch *The Port of Amsterdam* – Jacques Brel and *Ne Me Quitte Pas* then Bowie and Scott Walker.

Morven asks - Does it matter if the audience think its set in Amsterdam?

Pete – No, I don't care.

Pete says – Let's flick through some references. It's just his (*the sailor's*) flight of fancy. Let's look at Lotte Lenya.

Anna – So we're not sticking to the French thing?

Pete – Erm ... well no.

We watch Lotte Lenya.

Pete is excited but what's it for? It's the modern nebulous approach. All things are available so we end up with everything!

We watch Ute Lemper as well – *Pirate Jenny*.

We then watch Lindsay Kemp's company – *Flowers and Salieri*.

This experience is both refreshing *and* daunting. The professionals who were present at this rehearsal had a strong contextual command over the material and an ability to connect and edit the diverse mediated materials. However it is worth noting, bearing in mind Laura's comment on French film, that even within this group the gatekeepers of this material were predominantly Andrew and Pete due (it may be suggested) to age/experience, taste and directorial authority. For some of the actors it was a rapid collage of sources to which they had little or no prior knowledge and if we then consider this within a wider educational context it may be argued that an undergraduate student may struggle to engage with such a plethora of materials. Vygotsky conceived of the *zone of proximal development* in learning, which he referred to as:

... the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. (1978: 86)

This zone can never be reduced to a single linear trajectory from actual to potential levels of development but it may be argued that there is greater delimitation within a more traditional theatre-learning framework at undergraduate level than within an intermedial structure. For example, in my own recent practice at De Montfort University I have led a third year project focusing on the Lee Strasberg 'Method' and

applying this to Eugene O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh*. Complex as the play may be, the singularity of the text demarcates certain boundaries as do the defined 'Method' of Strasberg and the fields of research that may be most pertinent to the performer. The *zone of proximal development* within an intermedial domain must be seen as a plurality of trajectories, which are simultaneously active. Several media may be relevant within the discourse, hence multiple modalities of construction and consequently multiple threads of contextual history. If we consider *imitating the dog's* work as a teaching project then students would find themselves in a concurrent engagement with several theoretical frames of media; intermediality, remediation and transmediation, of which the latter two require both a knowledge of the new media that are being utilised *and* the incumbent media that are being repurposed, absorbed, digitised or transited from. Deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation of the students actual knowledge and their sense of their potential knowledge occur at a breathless pace as access to the resources they draw upon is often instantaneous. I noted on the same rehearsal day as I witnessed the rapid succession of *Youtube* clips that ideas were, on a couple of occasions, dismissed simply due to a perceived unacceptable time delay (thirty or forty seconds) in finding or buffering certain videos, at which point they moved on to another source.

Fragility is also of central significance when revisiting the conception of the human being as intermedium. Whilst earlier in this chapter I offered a temporal and spatial counter perspective to the *Dilemma of the Body as Intermedium*, the emotional affect and artistic effect of such a condition is not easily overcome by theoretical and

pedagogical concepts removed from the teaching environment. Whilst the image of the actor as an intermedium suggests some kind of centrality for their role in the production it potentially risks marginalisation as the construction of interconnected media forms are often given equal or greater credence and time within the rehearsal process. This difficulty was alluded to when interviewing Adam and Andrew in March 2010:

Adam – To create this character was early stuff and then that goes dormant a bit when we're putting together the whole show. We're just doing it and trying to get the look right and then we very intensively try and get that right. That's hard for actors who aren't used to it or actors who are because sometimes you're going to feel a bit neglected.

Andrew – Yeah I feel terrible. There is an emotional group writing it but I'm relying on Adam a lot to do it without my help.

There is the impression at times, accepted by the principle actors, that the overall image or *techno en scène* is the overriding factor and attention to the development of their role is left to their own intrapersonal talents. In May 2011, for example, half a day had been spent on creating and rendering a particular image as the actors waited. Suddenly Andrew, after many hours of stasis shouted to the group: "Come on let's get on with it ... give me some acting", after which I queried in my notes: 'Are they in a position to do some acting?' I also asked Adam about the actor/director relationship in their recent productions. I suggested that 'finding a role' did not seem

to be part of the discussion and he replied: “Yeah that’s kinda the last thing we put in.”

The agency of the performer in the intermedial space is destabilised; contested by the filmic media that can exist beyond the validating presence of the human actor. Gay McCauley points to this crucial difference when she writes:

... nothing on stage has any stable meaning divorced from the human agency of the actor. It is for example the actor who creates the sense of place even if an elaborate representational decor is also used. In the cinema, by contrast, a screen image of a place without any human presence is still perceived to be that place. (1987: 8)

Cinema’s incursion into the theatrical hypermedium deterritorialises the actor and hence within an educational paradigm this potentially marginalises the student. In interviews and observations of *imitating the dog* I noticed a range of reactions from the actors during the periods of hiatus when the digital media required attention. In my notes I commented on the quiet that descends whilst focus moves across to the internet or the processing of data on a *Mac* computer. Beyond a certain point, perhaps five minutes or more, the quiet turns into distraction and decisions to pass the time (joking more often than not) or tangential conversation. What is noticeable is that there is a limited sense of independent decision making away from the directorial team, as the *techno en scène* is so precise that it remains in the curatorial hands of Andrew and Pete. Hence the actors feel absolved from creative decision making and fall into what I have described, in keeping with the style of the work, as

an auteur system centred around the authorial voice of the directors. It may be speculated that cine-theatrical intermedial work engenders more of an auteur approach because of the precision of construction that is possible and the ability of the director's 'fingerprint' to remain within the performance through the filmic medium. Over forty years ago, the Swedish film director Vilgot Sjöman highlighted in *The Tulane Review* how relinquishing theatrical control to actors compared to the tighter, directorial control of film could be a difficult process when he stated: 'What I find painful in the theatre is the process of leaving - I mean the director gradually pulling back, slowly giving over more and more to the actors, until on opening night you're cut free. I can hardly stand this (I understand the actors love it).' (1966: 102)

To underline the auteur *modus operandi* Pete often finished a day's rehearsal with a clear command such as: "Tomorrow we need to juxtapose this with the French text. It's got to be sexier and you need to look like a John Paul Gautier advert all the time." (March 2010) Overall the ensemble functioned effectively within this mode of working but it must be acknowledged that they were a professional company in which the 'rules of engagement' are, in certain respects, different to those within an educational framework. The marginalisation that was acquiesced to in the rehearsal room would not be acceptable within most undergraduate teaching which comes under ever greater scrutiny with regular evaluations of teaching quality. Allied to this is the over-reliance on the auteur in this instance, which works against the constructivist ethos of a democratised learning environment. Scott W. Brown and Frederick B. King, citing the 'communities of learning' studies of Brown and

Campione (1990, 1997), stress this collectivism within constructivist models of learning.

[they] believe that communities of learners grow out of collaborative classrooms where the learners acquire and share a common knowledge base. Collaboration is, in fact, an absolute necessity in a community of learners (A. Brown, 1997) and is founded on the idea that expertise does not rest with a single individual (such as the teacher); rather, it is spread throughout the classroom. (2000: 246)

To respond to these potential tensions requires a multitude of teaching methodologies but central to this response is some reconsideration, as reflected upon earlier, of what the theatrical ensemble means in such circumstances. For this practice to function productively the performer/learner must be given the opportunity to validate their creative role and voice their agency as explicated in the interviews with the actors in *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls*. Recognition must also be given to their *fragile* status within the real/virtual environment and the complex negotiations they are engaged in between the *exo* and *endo*-skeletons that create the intermedium. The significance of this subject is not to be under estimated and hence it is revisited in both **Butterflies** and **Bells and Meteorites**.

Conclusion

That last thing is what you can't get, Carlo. Nobody can get to
that last thing. We keep on living in hopes of catching it once
and for all. (Kerouac 1998: 44)

In this chapter I have proposed that cine-theatrical intermedial practice offers us a mirror for our own 'being in the world'. It phenomenalises our everyday experience, which is both real and grounded but also conceptual and virtual as envisaged by Deleuze and von Glasersfeld. Film in its collaboration or juxtaposition with the live performer generates an 'imaging of time' in which our own fragile bodies may find their significance. For the constructivist pedagogue this proffers a new set of opportunities and concurrent challenges.

Intermedial performance provides the opportunity to situate students within a rich, mediatised performance environment that moves beyond the drama '*with* digital technologies' model as explicated and analysed by Anderson et al. (2009). It has the capacity to build upon students own enculturated learning and their sophisticated sense of their extended 'body schema' that reaches out beyond corporeal or experiential limitations. In doing so however it also allows, through the phenomenalisation of media layers, for students to see themselves situated within a rhizomatic web of significances, fragile yet significant. In particular it materialises our condition within time and space in a manner that purely live performance nor film could do as it is the confluence of our unpredictable real presence alongside the virtuality and fixedness of film that gives the work its significance and humanity. Intermedial practice creates a world that is 'becoming', a world in transformation.

Andrew in his March 2010 interview is keen to emphasise the significance of this process within the scenographic and thematic structure of *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls*:

Andrew - I think watching these worlds fold and unfold is interesting ... something about the beauty of a slow moving journey

MC – And you think that needs to happen in a live moment?

Andrew – Yes because that's what you don't get in film, film edits that out. It's about time for one world to fold into another. What's interesting for me intellectually is that this whole play is about transformation; it's about a belief in the possibility of transformation. The sea is a continually transforming space ... it's never still which is one of its attractions but also why it terrifies us ... you can't control it. (...) So this idea that you've got a stable and rigid world is kind of what the play's rejecting, and that's exactly what the scenography's doing. The form and the thematic are connected and that's what really excites me about this type of work ... it's not illustrating a theme it's actually embedded in what we do.

The form and content of their intermedial practice reflects the transitional nature of contemporary life as alluded to by Bhaba (2004) and Lavender (2012). This resonates with constructivist notions of education driven by process and its emphasis on

personal exploration and continual learning as proposed by Rasmussen in his conception of the 'good enough drama.'(2010)

The challenges lie in navigating this complex web of intermedial relations which interweave multiple and simultaneous strands of media modalities and discourses. Whilst the undergraduate student may find a greater initial ownership over the work due to the significance of contemporary digital literacies within intermedial practice this does not necessarily prevent canonical frames of reference being created, into which they have limited access. In recognising themselves as an intermedium this places them at risk of being left in a state of, to co-opt a Stanislavskian premise, 'solitude in public', central and visible but isolated as the exoskeleton of the *techno en scène* is constructed.

Balancing these potentialities is central to the inquiry of intermedial pedagogy. It is a delicate equilibrium but one worth finding, as recognising those points of fragility and transition that we live within is potentially liberating. In his collection of short stories entitled *Fragile Things*, Neil Gaiman reflects on this notion of fragility and writes:

It occurs to me that the peculiarity of most things we think of as fragile is how tough they truly are. There were tricks we did with eggs, as children, to show how they were, in reality, tiny load-bearing marble halls; while the beat of the wings of a butterfly in the right place, we are told, can create a hurricane across an ocean. (2007: 24)

Whilst the full implications of chaos theory may be beyond the claims of intermedial pedagogy it is a pertinent reminder that such recognition of our vulnerability and incompleteness is where we may find some sense of our 'being in the world'.

Butterflies

Preface

Butterflies: Pedagogy of absence considers *intermedial embodiment* in terms of our own relationship to self and the concept of self as inter-subjective 'other'. It centres upon my own teaching practice as the case study enquiry and so its lens is fundamentally directed towards the student experience within intermedial practice; considering the complexities of the embodied processes that they undertake in creating, collaborating and performing such work. It analyses how students may respond to a theatrical environment in which significant dislocations and reconnections are demanded of them in devising and performance terms. To consider this I draw upon the conceptual notions of *absence* and *dys-appearance* envisaged by Drew Leder (1990) as pedagogical frames and metaphors. The phenomenological theories of Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, all of whom Leder himself was influenced by, are correlated with his theories in a critique of how the student actor may negotiate notions of presence and absence, self and *other* and what it means to collaborate in such practices. An undergraduate performance of Robert Lepage's *Seven Streams of the River Ota* created with my own students at De Montfort University (DMU) provides the primary case study on which to develop constructivist pedagogical reflection.

Butterflies

Pedagogy of absence

Cellophane

Mister Cellophane

Shoulda been my name

Mister Cellophane

'Cause you can look right through me

Walk right by me

And never know I'm there

(*Chicago* John Kander 1975)

Introduction

Between September 2008 and February 2009, a cohort of third year Drama Studies undergraduates at DMU in Leicester adapted and then performed *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* by Robert Lepage as part of their assessment for the module entitled Drama Performance Project. In my capacity as a module tutor I acted as a director, facilitator and principal assessor for the project.

As well as engaging with Lepage's text of the play the intention was also to utilize his well documented methodologies for devising and performance creation and therein evaluate his ethos and processes as pedagogical frames within a specific university

context. For many years Lepage had been known for his use of the RSVP³⁹ method that foregrounded actor-centered initiatives, as they were encouraged to build characters and narratives from their own experience and develop 'Resources' and 'Scores' from this. Alongside the RSVP method there would also be reflection on three key traits in his work: *décalage*, *techno en scène* and *transformation*. These are addressed comprehensively in the next section but in brief these respectively relate to Lepage's focus on intuition, a technically infused *mise en scène* and the fluid shifts in signification and connotation that actors and objects on stage exploit.

Whilst this multitude of methods offered great potential it also had to be balanced with the educational needs of the students. The assessment of the module had three key components: presentation (on research and role development), performance and a final reflective journal. Having sought permission from the students to document and anonymise their practice, the emphasis of the research was placed upon the rehearsal and performance stages although references and quotes are taken from their final reflective journals. Beyond these basic protocols however I was always mindful that this particular case study, centering as it did on actual final year student practice, infused the process and the findings with a degree of sensitivity and significance distinct from the professional case studies.

³⁹ James Bunzli, citing Lawrence Halprin, outlines the RSVP methodology as follows: 'Lawrence Halprin defines the components of the RSVP Cycles: R: Resources, which are what you have to work with. These include human and physical resources and their motivation and aims. S: Scores, which describe the process leading to the performance. V: Valuation, which analyses the results of action and possible selectivity and decisions. The term "valuation" is one coined to suggest the action-oriented as well as the decision-oriented aspects of V in the cycle. P: Performance, which is the resultant of scores and is the style of the process.' (1999: 87 - 88)

Robert Lepage: his work in context

Canadian born Lepage, from the 1970's onwards, has been fascinated by and overtly influenced by a plethora of media. In his work he advocates 'theatricality' and the potential for all media to be utilised in the live event. Lepage has an acute sense of the cultural context of his audience and recognises the media rich communication systems to which they are exposed. Speaking in 1999 he stated:

If I play in front of an audience in a traditional theatre, the people who are in the room have seen a lot of films, they've seen a lot of television, they've seen rock videos, and they are on the net. They are used to having people telling stories to them in all sorts of ways. (Lepage in Dundjerović 2009: 51)

It is worth noting immediately that such an enculturated analysis of the audience could also be applied to the students making this type of work. Lepage's embrace of contemporary media creates a plurality in his approach that is distinct from the single author/single director literary tradition. Dundjerović suggests that his work may be defined by the term 'performance theatre' as described by Rose Lee Goldberg (1999). The genre is typified by the emphasis on non-text-based work, autobiography, absence of pre-conceptions, chronology or linear narrative and the willingness to communicate via a range of media. (Dundjerović 2009: 49) Lepage's identification with such techniques can be seen in the three key concepts of *décalage*, *techno en scène* and *transformation*. *Décalage* (originally a Piagetian term)

is, in a Lepageian sense, the self-imposed structural abandonment in which linear progression and rationality are subordinated to the energy of the performance text.

For Robert Lepage, *décalage* is the main impulse, the principle mode of working, and a major result of his productions, both onstage and in the audience. It is an acknowledgment of gaps, indeterminacies; it is a way of working that trades on impulse, intuition, and broad creative freedom; it results in a theatre of simultaneity and juxtaposition in which actor, image, 'text', and audience are brought into a dialogue, a questioning, and an active co-constitutive role. (Bunzli 1999: 89–90)

Collaboration is central to this ethos and, as can be seen with *imitating the dog* and *Lightwork*, there is a longstanding group of co-creators that develop the work alongside the director. At *La Caserne* (*Ex Machina's* base in Quebec City) several actors including Marie Gignac, Michel Bernatchez and Rick Miller have worked with Lepage for many years and for each new project he often seeks international collaborations with renowned directors or companies. Lepage also blurs the actor/director boundary and often within rehearsals will shift between these modes of practice himself. (Dundjerović 2010: 170)

Equally fundamental to the workshop environment is the integration of technologists as media artists. They are a constant presence in the rehearsal space at *La Caserne* and play a key role in constructing the *techno en scène*; a phrase coined

by Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović to distinguish between a traditional *mise-en-scène* and a Lepagean stage composition that is infused with the form and content of contemporary media, particularly film and digital arts. (2006: 69)

Transformation in Lepagean theatre reflects both the rehearsal processes and the form of the work. Firstly it characterises the continual process of change and reinvention at the heart of the RSVP method. Dundjerović writes: 'The performance narrative is found and developed through a process of transformation that may take several years of touring in different countries before reaching its final destination.' (2009: 29) It also emphasises the temporal and spatial fluidity of the action on stage and the capacity for objects and bodies to move between significations, offering metaphorical imagery as a super-imposition upon the narrative. This can be seen for example in *The Dragons Trilogy* (1987) when a row of chairs is transformed by an actor lying across them with his arms outstretched, indicating a plane in flight. (2009: 31) It has been noted by Steve Dixon that in this respect Lepage is heavily influenced by the work of Joseph Svoboda and his notion of *psycho-plastic* space. (2007b: 508)

Any proposition of an intermedial pedagogy must reconsider the performer's corporeal presence on stage and how we quantify and value students' contributions when they are outside the constraints of traditional role embodiment and may be seen to disappear into the mediatised environment. In intermedial Lepagean work, as can be seen from the student examples outlined later in this study, the performer's body is often in flux, transforming between physical and digital realms and between functions, sometimes in role and sometimes symbolic. This potentially liberates, enriches *and* problematises the experiential learning of the student engaged in such

practice as it offers new, situated perspectives on subject matter beyond those offered through a fixed representation of character whilst also challenging the very notion of character and actor centrality.

Lepage is widely considered to be one of the world's leading intermedial practitioners (Gieseckam 2007, Dundjerović 2010) and the filmic image and the features of *techno en scène* can be seen throughout his career from earlier solo work such as *Needles and Opium* (1991) which made use of basic overhead projection through to more complex pieces including *The Andersen Project* (2006) which integrated sophisticated layers of film and live action. These media rich integrations were also integral to the original production of *Seven Streams of the River Ota* developed predominantly between 1994 and 1996. A principle stimulus for the production was the 1959 film *Hiroshima Mon Amour* directed by Alain Resnais. The film focuses on the relationship between a French actress and a Japanese architect as they reflect on the breakup of their relationship and compare it to the 'fallout' of the atomic explosion. The fragmented, non-linearity of the film and the narratives of memory and trans-cultural relationships can be seen as influences throughout *Seven Streams*. The original set of the play represented a traditional Japanese house and garden with seven sliding screens that had large mirrors placed behind them. These structures were manipulated to denote a variety of locations from a New York apartment to the Terezin concentration camp. Film was not as prevalent in the production as in other works by Lepage but, as Greg Gieseckam notes, it still played a central role.

Video is used relatively sparingly, and yet, as often with Lepage, an open theatricality is paradoxically combined with the sort of tight focus shots, cross-fades, lighting effects, music and employment of extra-diegetic inserts that remind us of film. (2007: 239)

This well-documented combination of a democratic, pluralistic approach to devising alongside a ceaseless instinct to collage media references and assemble the performance within a *techno en scène* offers the potential for Lepage's methodology to be conceived of as a productive educational model of intermediality. This is not a presumption however that it is without flaws and indeed it is the tensions at the heart of Lepage's practice that make it so fertile as a lens for enquiry.

The criticism that is levelled at Lepage resonates with the tensions that arose during the DMU rehearsal period and it highlights the challenges that are inherent in intermedial practice that deterritorialises the actor on stage and places technology such as film at the core of the work. This instinct to reconsider the body in performance alongside technology resonates with the posthuman theorisations of N. Katherine Hayles, in her seminal work, *How We Became Posthuman* (1999). She identified several posthuman 'assumptions', the last of which stated: 'Fourth, and most important (...) the posthuman view configures human being so that it can be seamlessly articulated with intelligent machines.' (1999: 3) Although Lepage's work does not experiment with state of the art cyborg technology such as in the practice of Stelarc, he does fundamentally reposition the human body so that ontologically it is receptive to fusions with other stage 'objects' (such as filmic personae) and in this

sense we may see historical comparisons to the theatrical conceptions of Edward Gordon Craig or Bauhaus. Dundjerović in *The Theatricality of Robert Lepage* (2007) writes:

The body is a theatre sign that has a visual function, alongside technically created imagery. Since all elements on the stage are, as Barthes says, “artificial and not factitious” an actor’s body can become a theatrical “object”, an artificial entity allowing the actor to play with the physicality of his own body as a theatrical object. (85)

Whilst Lepage’s work receives many plaudits across the globe it is also criticised on several fronts. Alongside many other directors in this field of practice (as also explored in **Can Dogs Speak French?**) critics question the use and motive of the cinematic aesthetic in his work. Lyn Gardner, in response to *Elsinore* (1996) wrote: ‘Hell, why didn’t he just have done with it and make a movie of *Hamlet* rather than a theatre piece that looks like a film?’ (1996) Several writers have also expressed concern about the impact of *techno en scène*. Having seen *Zulu Time* in 1999 Patrice Pavis commented on how the ‘foreign body of technology destroyed the live body and human presence.’ (Pavis in Dundjerović 2007: 183) *The Observer’s* review of the 2011 production of *The Blue Dragon* highlighted the potential weaknesses in the reliance on *décalage* as it noted that it was ‘visually luxuriant (...) Yet the plot is too schematic and the dialogue often robotically executed.’ (Clapp 2011: 36)

The actors themselves within the creative process are put under a degree of pressure by Lepage’s eclectic, *décalage* style that is always in flux. James Bunzli

(1999) amongst several writers has noted how actors such as Marie Brassard and Marie Gignac have found themselves in conflict with Lepage's methods and actors unfamiliar with his style, such as those brought in for the 1992 London version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, have struggled within rehearsals to grasp the RSVP process that is always in transformation even during the performance period. (Dundjerović 2009) It is worth noting that it is not uncommon for Lepage's productions to be incomplete at their first public performance or postponed due to technical difficulties. However, it is because of these very real tensions that I am drawn towards his practice as my own experiences in rehearsal mirror his difficulties and the concerns raised by critics. A robust pedagogy must walk towards rather than ignore the problematic nature of intermediality and Lepage undoubtedly offers this challenge.

Seven Streams at DMU: setting the scene

To contextualise the work of the students I offer a brief synopsis of the play (as originally created by Lepage and *Ex Machina*) and a summary of our adaptation as this highlights the organic nature of the process which creates both an opportunity for ownership but also a potential impediment to learning inherent in the continual (often anxiety inducing) flux as students had to embrace endless amendments to text and their roles. To preface the synopsis it is important to state the significance of the performance text in Lepage's work alongside, and often in preference to, the literary, dramatic text. The principle of conceiving 'text' as three dimensional and malleable runs throughout his RSVP methodology and therefore 'writing' text in

visual, often filmic terms (referred to as *écriture scénique* by the Canadian director Roger Planchon) during the rehearsal process is fundamental to his practice. Hence it was a central feature of the DMU production as we sought to negotiate a new interpretation that necessitated major edits and new writing.

The Seven Streams of the River Ota was, in its professional version, an epic play spanning several decades within the narrative and lasting over eight hours in performance. The 'seven streams' referred to in the title are a literal reference to the tributaries of the River Ota in Hiroshima, Japan and a metaphorical frame on which to construct seven interconnecting narratives that link the global catastrophes of the atom bomb, the Holocaust and AIDS through the personal lives of those who were affected by them. As a performance group, the students and myself at DMU chose to focus on the narratives within the first four 'streams' as written in the text, so therefore it is pertinent to offer some brief insight into these sections. Central plots within these 'streams' include the love affair between Nozomi (a 'Hibakusha': survivor of the Hiroshima bomb) and an American serviceman, Luke, who is in Japan to survey the damage for the US military. Luke is already married with a son in America but the new relationship blossoms and eventually leads to a child being born, unbeknownst to Luke. The narrative of *Madame Butterfly* by Puccini inspires the plot, but unlike the opera, we see the long-term after effects of the relationship as Luke returns to New York where he slowly dies of leukemia as a result of being exposed to the radiation. His son from his first marriage, Jeffrey, is looking after his dying father in New York when Luke's Japanese son, another Jeffrey, arrives in the same apartment block by chance. They self-title themselves Jeffrey 1 (American) and

Jeffrey 2 (Japanese) to avoid confusion and over time they grow to realize their shared familial ties and become close brothers. This bond is tested until the end of Jeffrey 1's life as he asks Jeffrey 2 and his wife to be witnesses at his own assisted suicide, which is his escape from the physical ravages and uncertain future of AIDS. From the first four narrative 'streams' for the students we selected key narratives and used them both as a text to realise on stage, but also as stimuli from which to devise three or four other threads of our own which were developed from peripheral characters or sub plots from the original on to which students or myself could attach or project their own characters. New strands included a focus on the emotional fall-out for the Enola Gay bomber crew and their wives and a series of narratives documenting the lives of webcam sex workers. This took its inspiration from the theme of cameras (and what an image can reveal and hide), which is key to the original text. One student in her journal astutely summated the significance of the web-cam scenes when, citing Karen Fricker she wrote: 'The webcam is used similarly to the camera in *Seven Streams* as it is a metaphor for illusion and 'seeing beyond immediate appearances to a deeper truth or understanding.' (Fricker 2003: 91)'

Another important clarification to make at this stage (and analysed further in ***Going with the stream***) is the specifically televisual quality of certain scenes within the DMU production, as distinct to the more filmic identity of *imitating the dog's* work or indeed the original production of *Seven Streams* as created by Lepage. The open stage space had a large gauze to the rear, on to which was projected live-feed images and pre-recorded footage. (see Fig. 6) Whilst the scale of the screen may be

regarded as filmic, the nature and the quality of the images allied themselves more readily to the intimacy and content of television, as we may perceive it in contextually and operationally qualified terms. The footage was predominantly taken from television news footage such as 9/11 and the live feed was created to mimic



Fig. 6

online sex-chat videos. Whilst many of the filmic theories and methodologies explicated so far hold true for this work, as outlined in *Television: a not so brief intermission*, I will also delineate specific tele-visual modalities and pragmatic aspects that impacted upon the project, drawing again upon the work of Lars Elleström but also Nick Kaye and Matthew Causey amongst others.

The absent body: Drew Leder, phenomenology and the 'digital double'

Theoretical reflections on how we are 'present in the world' seem particularly apt in this context as we consider the presence and absence of the student body and their significance within the performance space. Notions of self and agency are problematized when the body of the performer is 'scattered' across real and virtual stages within the theatrical hypermedium.

In *The Absent Body* (1990) Drew Leder draws from the phenomenological writings of Husserl and Heidegger and specifically develops Merleau-Ponty's reflections on modes of embodiment, which he began in the unfinished essay entitled *The Visible and the Invisible* (1968). Both Leder and Merleau-Ponty aim to consider the nature of our presence and absence in everyday life. Leder, in the introduction to his own text proposes: '... while in one sense the body is the most abiding and inescapable presence in our lives, it is also characterized by absence.' (1990:1) In the opening chapter of *The Absent Body* entitled *The Ecstatic Body* he goes on to explain that in everyday activity we absent ourselves perceptually from our own body and disappear into the 'purposeful action' (49) that we are engaged in. He contests that our predominant activities are projections away from the body, hence creating an *absence* of the body or what may be viewed as a forgetting of our physical selves. Using examples of everyday actions such as eating an apple he identifies a series of externalized purposes that he refers to as *telos*. He writes:

Thus, most actions manifest what I will term a *physical telos* directed away from one's own corporeal base. One acts from the here-and-now body to spatially or temporally noncoincident objects. Furthermore, this is usually accompanied by an *attentional telos* outward. One's body is rendered subsidiary, not only as a physical means to an end but within the accompanying structure of attention. (1990: 18)

As a means of expressing this state of being he offers the Heideggerian term '*ecstasis*' (1990: 21). He outlines his own iteration as follows:

This word includes within it the root *ek*, meaning "out", and *stasis*, meaning "to stand". The ecstatic is that which stands out. This admirably describes the operation of the lived body. The body always has a determinate stance – it is that whereby we are located and defined. But the very nature of the body is to project outward from its place of standing. (1990: 22)

Leder suggests that we 'disappear' from our bodies as our 'intentionality' (echoing Husserl) projects us outwards to achieve a goal within the external world. However he also reminds us that this everyday mode of being does not nullify our ability to be aware of our bodies in time and space and to self observe. He writes that we may apprehend our own selves through reflective surfaces (mirrors, bodies of water and so on), through the gaze of another person upon us and through gazing upon or being in touch with our own bodies. (1990: 23) Later in the book he goes on to identify how the absence from our own experience can be made conscious through the concept he refers to as '*dys-appearance*'. In using the Greek prefix *dys* Leder is invoking a notion of the body as 'bad' or 'ill', dysfunctioning against itself. Through this reappearance we may see ourselves as strange unto ourselves. (1990: 87)

This simultaneity of presence-absence and these modes of re-apprehension of self resonate with the theatrical conception of the 'digital double' as proposed by Steve Dixon (2007a: 241 – 270). In his analysis he draws upon the concept of the 'double' in Artaud's work and the construct of the doppelgänger whilst also invoking Heidegger's notion of 'uncanniness' (*Unheimlich*) to illustrate the digital double's capacity to make the world and our selves strange and unnerving to our own perception. He outlines a variety of 'doubles' created in the realm of digital performance. In the latter part of his analysis he focuses on the role of avatars and computer generated 'doubles' but, in relation to DMU's *Seven Streams*, the first two 'doubles' that he refers to as the 'mirror' and the 'alter ego' are of most significance. The 'mirror' or 'reflection' double are created when the performer utilises live or recorded footage of themselves on stage. (246) He uses *Blast Theory's 10 Backwards* (1999) as an example in which the main character, Niki, records herself eating and then precisely copies the actions of the video recording of herself. Dixon notes how this simple replaying, exaggerated in proportion on the large screen makes the everydayness of eating strange and unreal whilst also considering the temporal significance of her actions. He writes:

The universal act of eating is replayed as a slow, intense facial dance, a mirror-play duet between the live performer and her digital reflection. (...) The sequence synchronizes Niki to her past, and the audience to the apparently simultaneous "presents" of her live and projected/recorded form. (2007a: 247)

The 'alter-ego' double is distinct from the 'mirror' in that it manifests other variants of 'selves' in relation to which the performer may converse or interact in some fashion. Dixon uses the example of the *Chameleons Group* performance entitled *Chameleon's 4: the Doors of Serenity* (2002) in which Dixon himself played a cyborg who converses with two other doppelgängers. (251) The 'alter-ego' may shift its appearance but is in some way connoting or referencing back to its progenitor.

These 'double' projections disrupt pre-existing notions of the locus of performance as they distribute the performer spatially and temporally. They render them both simultaneously present across live and videated stages but this simultaneity or multiplicity creates an equal sense of absence as the live body is easily dematerialised and (re)presented across technical media. The 'double', as both 'mirror' and 'alter-ego' were utilised within *Seven Streams* at DMU and therein the students experienced the challenges of presence and absence inherent in such practice. In performing with their *ecstasis* selves they had to recalibrate their performance skills and more significantly for this study they had to reconsider how they might have agency over the work and a sense of achievement when both the methodology of Lepage and the technological potential of the 'double' destabilised textual certainties of pre-prescribed characters created by an author and embodied solely by the actors materiality; voice, posture, movement in space and so forth. In this environment, pedagogy must be creative in its response or risks marginalising the learners and the significance of what may be learnt.

Constructing pedagogy of absence

Initially I have focused upon Leder's proposal of the *absent* body as it relates directly to our material, corporeal existence. Whilst this remains a central focus I also propose a metaphorical reading of the term in relation to the centrality and/or marginalisation of the body in intermedial devising and performance. The digital 'double' phenomenalizes our corporeal absence whilst concurrently the processes of *décalage*, *techno en scène* and *transformation* challenge the nature of our individual and collective presence within the creative process.

Let us focus on the material body itself in the first instance. Absence, it must be stated, in this paradigm, is not a void. Absence and presence are inextricably connected. Leder himself, drawing upon the Latin etymology of absence as meaning 'being-away', explicates this when he writes:

The absence is the being-away of something. The lived body, as ecstatic in nature, is that which is away from itself. Yet this absence is not equivalent to a simple void, a mere lack of being. The notion of being is after all present in the very word absence. The body could not be away, stand outside, unless it had a being and stance to begin with. (1990: 22)

Leder emphasises that we are always the 'orientational center' (*sic*) of our 'perceptual field' (22) and so the absence we succumb to is grounded within our presence. Reflecting my own proposition of the body as intermedium, open and potentially vulnerable to the rhizomatic frames we exist within, Leder proposes that

our 'being-in-the-world' relies upon our body's 'self effacing transitivity.' (15) This also mirrors Andy Lavender's explication of the transitory 'condition' (2012) of our lives as discussed in the previous chapter and correlates with a constructivist model of learning as all these perspectives are predicated upon a self effacing movement out towards the world, engaging in an interpretation of our experiences rather than imposing a preordained ontological framework. Piaget, von Glasersfeld and other constructivist theorists remind us that our experience of the world may only ever be inter-subjective, as we can never truly know our external reality. However, as noted earlier in *Phenomenology as intermedial lens*, this inter-subjectivity is built upon an understanding of 'otherness' and a 'realization that I am only one among many and that my perspective on the world is by no means privileged (Husserl, 1973d, p. 645).'

(Zahavi 2001: 160)

Piaget reminds us that intelligence organises the external world to fit its own needs (1937) and von Glasersfeld underscores this when he states:

Constructivism drops the requirement that knowledge is 'true' in the sense that it should match an objective reality. All it requires of knowledge is that it be viable, in that it fit into the world of the knower's experience, the only 'reality' accessible to human reason. (1996: 308)

Conscious of the criticism that constructivist thinking may become solipsistic he is also eager throughout his writings to state that individuals can make viable judgments on the value of their experiences. In 1983 he wrote:

What determines the value of the conceptual structures is their experiential adequacy, their goodness of fit with experience, their viability as means for the solving of problems, among which is, of course, the never-ending problem of consistent organization that we call understanding. (1983: 6)

Our engagement with a digital 'double' of self may be seen as an inter-subjective engagement through which we construct certain 'viable' understandings of our identity *and* our 'objective reality'. The absence that we permit in the digitally mediated rehearsal or performance environment paradoxically brings our very real presence into sharp relief. Eirini Nedelkopoulou, in her recent article *The Mediated Double Body: An Instance of Ab-sence and Alterity in Mixed Media Theatre* (2010) specifically reflects upon Leder's conception of the absent body in relation to the digital double. In the introduction she states that '... the technological, when next to the physical body, declares a sharp presence, yet both bodies are complementary and correlative phenomena.' (2010: 1) Succinctly she goes on to propose that '... doubleness in mixed-media theatre is a process that takes body away to bring it back again as Other.' (2) Referencing a 2003 Greek production of *4.48 Psychosis* by Sarah Kane she considers what manifests itself and what may be connoted when a live performer confronts their mediat(is)ed⁴⁰ double. Considering *dys-appearance* as

⁴⁰ Nedelkopoulou's original note reads: 'I avoid using the term mediatized to resist creating any socio-political connotations of a cultural object of mass media. Equally ambiguous is the term mediated as it does not necessarily refer to media technologies, but as Chapple and Kattenbelt contend to 'all forms of communication' that 'are mediated by signs' (2006: 23). Therefore, I often utilise the term mediat(is)ed and mediat(isat)ion in my attempt to make a distinction from the above terms, while still referring to the representational nature of media technologies.' (2010: 11)

envisaged by Leder, Nedelkopolou suggests that a 'double' in performance terms may problematise and disturb our sense of a stable self-identity. She directly quotes Leder who writes that the body '... may emerge as an alien thing, a painful prison or tomb in which one is trapped [...]. The experienced self is rent in two as one's own corporeality exhibits a foreign will.' (1990: 87) Whilst this psychologically 'painful' vision clearly applies to *4.48 Psychosis*, the conception of an 'alien thing' may be extended to represent a phenomenalisation of our alterity in a broader sense, the strangeness of our fragmented personae or merely the strangeness of our own material presence in the world. This may be as pleasurable or liberating as it is painful. In either case it is revealing. In a sense we are liberated if we envisage the videated 'double' as part of our 'body schema' as proposed by Merleau-Ponty. It is an object, or perhaps more accurately an inter-subject that we can assimilate into **our schema** wherein our own material body as performer retreats from our perception and becomes the 'theatrical object' as envisaged by Dundjerović. (2007: 85) What begins to emerge, it may be proposed, is an awareness of our own spatialised, *absent* body, phenomenised through the 'double'.

This may at first seem trivial if we assume that we can always experience our own body. However due to our innate proprioception and 'self effacing transitivity' as Leder suggests, we are predominantly unaware of our own body in the world. Philip Brey, drawing upon Merleau-Ponty as well as Don Ihde's conception of technological embodiment (1990), highlights this coenesthetic absence in our everyday lives when he writes: 'The external world is experienced as a spatial structure, in which things

are, relative to us, remote or near, high or low, or to the right or to the left. The body, however, is not normally experienced as a spatial entity of the kind found in one's external environment.' (2000: 5) He goes on to state that '... an embodied technology is a technology that is incorporated into one's body schema, which implies that it becomes part of one's bodily space (Merleau-Ponty's 'space of situation')'. (2000: 11) As we engage with the 'double' we actualise a reflection on self, realised through the absencing from the corporeal form. Nedelkopolou relates this experience to Leder's explanation of primary and secondary absence (1990: 90) as we first direct our attention towards the 'other' videated body (primary absence) and then, in the secondary absence, the body 'uncouples' itself from its experiential self and projects or directs itself towards the 'other', perceiving and then experiencing it as an extension of their technological schema. In this sense it is a simultaneous experience of *within* and *without*; connected from *within* as our body extends its schema to embrace the technology and concurrently *without* as the image is 'alien' in its 'mirror' representation or 'alter ego' distortion of self. Within this paradigm lies the nascence of *pedagogy of absence*, which seeks ironically to engage directly with the presence of our corporeal and sensorial existence in space. It does not however seek to reduce the experience to the primacy of the 'flesh and blood' but confronts the fragmented and atomised nature of our posthuman self in a contemporary world. I would perhaps summate it so far as a pedagogical approach that seeks to create an intimacy with self across real and virtual fields of perception.

Let us turn now to the issue of the metaphor of absence and the marginalization or disappearance the student may encounter in the intermedial environment,

enmeshed with large scale projections of their own forms to which they are wedded either through live feed or pre-recorded footage that requires on stage interaction. Not only are performers challenged by this techno-phenomenon but also by the very nature of the devising and performance environment, which in the example of Lepage's *techno en scène* does not necessarily centralise the material actor. In this aspect the pedagogy builds upon the reflections in the previous chapter where I indicated the relationship between the analogous *endo* and *exo*-skeletons when creating intermedial performance. However in this chapter I seek to extend this analysis in a consideration of how such methodologies and stage phenomena may actually challenge the students' ability to express their learning in embodied terms. By this I am suggesting that intermedial work, which absents the body from itself, not only creates a sense of fragility but also reframes and at times problematises some of the fundamental modes and expressions of learning in a constructivist environment.

In understanding this problem let us consider the nature of constructivist learning paradigms and the processes that students engage in to develop agency over their learning and a sense of authorship over their understanding. A constant theme running through constructivist models is the notion of *collaboration* as a central mode of experience to unearth and test new knowledge. It is inherent in the social learning philosophy of John Dewey, in the 'zone of proximal development' as conceived of by Vygotsky and in countless studies including Totten et al. (1991), Johnson et al. (1993) and Jonassen (1999). Brown and King emphasise its importance when they write: 'Collaboration is, in fact, an absolute necessity in a community of

learners (A. Brown, 1997) and is founded on the idea that expertise does not rest with a single individual (such as the teacher), rather, it is spread throughout the classroom.’ (2000: 246) A specific constructivist example in which the centrality of collaboration can be seen is John B. Black and Robert O. McClintock’s explication of a learning process entitled *Interpretation Construction (ICON) Design Model* (1995). The initial stages are focused on *observation* and *interpretation* of what is perceived. These phenomena are then *contextualized* with wider reading or study materials followed by what the authors refer to as *cognitive apprenticeship* wherein ‘Students serve as apprentices to teachers to master observation, interpretation and contextualization.’ (1995: 1) As the students develop independence and agency over the material they move into a phase of *collaboration*, through which they construct *multiple interpretations* and recognise that these interpretations may give rise to *multiple manifestations*. (ibid)

This model is robust and a proven framework for constructivist pedagogy as attested to by many examples from their own research. However in performance learning environments and particularly intermedial environments the manner in which these processes manifest themselves can become problematic and potentially needs recalibrating. In educational performance situations, learning and the expression of that learning is predominantly an embodied process whereby students engage in practical exploration and embodied explication of their emerging understanding, be that the spatialization of physical theatre techniques, the connotation of dialogue and so forth. If we focus particularly on the processes of *collaboration* and *multiple interpretation*, the *ICON* model, it must be noted, still has validity for the embodied

arts subjects as students may productively explore these processes in practical and, where appropriate, role orientated modes. Lepagean practice itself, in many respects, reflects the ethos and *modus operandi* of this constructivist methodology. The process led approach of *décalage* with its emphasis on transition and performance as part of the learning cycle (in terms of RSVP) correlates with the notion of the 'good enough' drama in education process as proposed by Bjørn Rasmussen. (2010)

However, with intermedial practice the embodiment may be seen, in many manifestations such as *Seven Streams* or Nedelkopolou's example of *4.48 Psychosis*, to be substantively different. There is arguably a specific complexity to the engagement of students with the notion of self as 'other'. If we recognize the potential of *pedagogy of absence* we must also recognize the challenges inherent in processes that demand the learner to step away from a more familiar embodiment of role where the immediate physical presence of the actor themselves secures a degree of agency (SA1) merely through the autonomy over their own voice and movement. In embracing the notion of *absence* and the degrees of absenting that may lead to a liberating view of ones self within the world we must acknowledge the discreet conceptual differences this generates as we ask students to function in particular spatial and temporal realms. *Collaboration* specifically in cine-theatrical intermedial practice becomes a complex web of live and videated interactions across multiple temporalities and spaces. In a paper I gave at the 2011 TAPRA conference (held at the University of Kingston) that was entitled: *Can we ever be together in the intermedial?*, I made the following observation on collaboration:

I am not sure if any performers in intermedial space are ever truly able to feel a communal experience in that space. To be more precise I mean a shared experience between each other, moments of ensemble or complicité. My concern is that co – presence between performers is fundamentally altered, disrupted even, by the integration of digitally mediated images. (2011: 1-2)

In recent years a number of scholars have sought to validate the virtual presence and telematic performance within a variety of paradigms. In phenomenological terms, for example, it has been argued by Martha Ladly (2007) and others that virtual presence (or interaction with virtual presence) can be conceived of within Heidegger's notion of *Dasein*, offering participants a real sense of performance in the moment, hyper-aware of their connections to the physical and sensorial world around them. However, my contention is that such a philosophical perspective may only address the individual experience and cannot truly answer concerns over the absence of the collective transformation that ensemble work can bring. Ladly (2007) does make the point that millions of people use digital interfaces to feel connected to the world and one another but I would argue that such connectivity and a sense of 'being in the world' is a type of reality but not necessarily a comprehensive substitute for the communal act in shared time and space. A certain liberating vulnerability is engaged when you are viscerally aware of other bodies around you that may literally need *your* body and physical effort to keep them artistically and at times literally 'safe' on stage, as may be witnessed in physical theatre practice. Such

virtual communication potentially excludes what Heidegger himself referred to as 'savouring'; the crucial first hand experience. It may be suggested that an intermedial *pedagogy of absence* creates both productive and problematic tensions within and between the intra-personal 'intimacy of self' and the inter-personal desire to be together and construct understanding as a collective. In the remainder of the chapter I will seek to synthesise and address these tensions that *absence and disappearance* create.

Going with the stream: the making of Seven Streams at DMU

No-one welcomes chaos, but why crave stability and predictability?

(Hugh Mackay 2011: 67)

What the student performers held in their hands felt, to all intents and purposes, like a finished article. It looked like a play, it read like a play, indeed it seemed anything but a catalyst for intermedial devising as it potentially ran for over eight hours without any additions being made. There was nothing initially to suggest ephemerality or transformativity. The text of *The Seven Streams of the River Ota* that the students possessed was indeed a faithful transcription of the performances given by the company of *Ex Machina* in 1996 at the Wiener Festwochen. Yet the seeming permanence of the script was illusory as it was almost instantly superseded in the evolutionary process of *Ex Machina's* work. This is highlighted in Karen Fricker's introduction to the text:

As photography is an important element of *The Seven Streams*, it seems appropriate to think of this script as a snapshot of *The River Ota* at a certain point in its history – specifically as it was performed in Vienna in June 1996. The river will have flowed on, and doubtless there will be changes, both major and minor in the production by the time this script sees print. (Fricker 1996 vi - vii)

The stability and permanence of the dramatic text were therefore open to renegotiation as we proposed to reinterpret the dramatic text as a newly structured intermedial performance text. Student expectations about the construction of the work were set to be challenged by the deterritorialisation of responsibilities and destabilising of certainties that many conventional text to stage processes may presume to rely upon.

The challenge for the group begins to be revealed when we recognize the nature of the tasks with which they were faced. Over the course of the six months devising process the group had to deconstruct Lepage's original text, select sections or 'streams' that they wished to focus on and devise new 'streams' to complement the existing narratives. Within this they would be asked to embrace the RSVP methodology as utilized by Lepage himself and the three key principles of *décalage*, *techno en scène* and *transformation*. Initially this may sound like an over complication of the devising process but it is timely to remember that initially the professional actors working on the original *Seven Streams* had the freedom to start from their own personal perspectives, with a 'clean page' for ideas, unencumbered

by existing script. The very nature of Lepage's RSVP method is centered on the imperative to begin from the intra - personal perspective. As Dundjerović reminds us: 'It is commonly accepted in discourse on Lepage's theatricality that his directing and devising emphasize the performers' subjectivity, intuition, and spontaneity.' (2007: 29) Whereas, the student performers at DMU found themselves in a hinterland between what existed and what may exist, between the imagination of another and the imagination of their own making.

The DMU performers were introduced to RSVP within a workshop led by Aleksandar Saša Dundjerović himself, who has worked alongside Lepage and written extensively on his work. So, the group had an early exposure to the notion of 'transformative *mise en scène*', which is central to the philosophy and praxis of Lepage.

At the heart of his transformative *mise en scène* are performers' fragmentary individual and group experiences, shaped by the audience's reception. The transformative *mise en scène* reinforces the postmodern and post structuralist notion of infinite possibilities of reading, without an author – imposed meaning setting a limit to the reader's (spectator's) response. (2007: 26)

Aleksandar emphasised the instinctive nature with which the text should be explored and elevated the potential for the group to initiate new 'streams' (or storylines) that could reflect their experiences. The prospect, from Aleksandar's perspective, of a Lepage facsimile was seen to be an unproductive exercise as he

stated in the workshop: “...what is the point in copying *Seven Streams*, the stories belong to someone else.” (20/11/08)

With this in mind, the group was invited to approach the text as negotiable, a point of entry and departure (akin to the metaphorical function of the airport in *Zulu Time*⁴¹), which can be edited, re ordered and elaborated upon. For a drama lecturer, such as myself, this was a liberating opportunity as it offered a creative marriage between the ‘concreteness’ of textual exploration and the unknown of devising. Students had a firm base from which to begin but also the permission (inherent in Lepage’s methodology) to rewrite text and create new material within an already established stylistic framework. In principle, therefore, the path was clear, yet the process from this point forth generated a range of anxieties that on reflection may have been predicted.

The student performers perception of text and its value is particularly worthy of record here. They placed a noticeable significance on the existing text to the extent that the roles and narratives within the 1996 translation held a pre-eminence over any self created material and created an early block to initiating personal *scores* and new ‘streams’. Tension, therefore, arose in the process of allocating the roles that were already ‘prescribed’ by Lepage as many saw these characters as *the* central figures within the drama rather than an initial set of roles on which to build significant others. Whilst it was unforeseen, in retrospect it may be viewed as perfectly understandable if consideration is given to the pre-eminence of text within

⁴¹ *Zulu Time* – 1999 Lepage production in which the central ‘transformative’ space was based on the *Resource* of an airport lounge.

the drama education and training of students, both within university and the UK secondary/tertiary education process (11 – 18 years). Whilst the student performers had experience of devising within other situations, when presented with a play text there was an instinct, learned over many years, to value the written word and perceive it as permanent and authorial in prescribing boundaries. Amplifying this anxiety and reluctance to forfeit the haven of the text was the student perception of the visual nature of Lepage's work. The text that was potentially being created was not only rooted in devised, self reflexive material, it was also grounded in a visual and videated language that gave prominence to the kinetic and proxemic interaction between actor, audience, space and technology; the *techno en scène*. The presumption that the performers would accept parity between these two approaches – the lines on the page and the action (real and virtual) dislocated in time and space – was not a safe one to make, as western (particularly British) theatrical traditions are enmeshed with the pre-eminence of the text and the secondary consideration of visual language.

The intentions and implications of *techno en scène* are far greater than merely incorporating technology to embellish the spectacle and popularise such work to contemporary audiences. For the DMU cast, the desire in *Seven Streams* was to explore how identity (personal and social personae) and memory are (re)constructed through mediated forms. The construction of roles from the beginning was informed by the use of video and live feed and all the performers were aware, if uneasily at times, that their central roles or aspects of their performance may be in projected

form on to the large rear gauze. This became particularly significant for the webcam sex workers, the doctor / nurse personae and the Enola Gay wives.

In the early stages of rehearsal it was difficult for some students to envisage how these roles would realise themselves in performance and only when we came to the later workshop sessions in the performance space did they find the reassurance to experiment and create wholly or partially videated roles. The physical space and the technology together appeared to offer them 'permission' to renegotiate the narrative structure through the reflective editing process of *valuaction* (see RSVP). One performer (taking on a 'sexchat' role) wrote in her journal at the time:

Once I was confined to a square box of lighting, saw my body
projected through a live feed camera and heard the music
from 'Madame Butterfly' I felt the role had become three
dimensional, visual and existed in the play. (2008)

This comment highlights for me the multi-dimensional structure of intermedial roles and the hybrid nature of the construction that is only fully realised in the *techno en scène*. The role created by her appearing live and as a 'mirror double' on screen simultaneously produced an effect that made strange the relationship between the housewife and the sexualised persona she had to project in order to earn money. It was metaphorical in the sense that it connoted a reflective '*ecstasis*', as the female character on stage perceived herself as both sexually appealing and tragically 'removed' from her own body in the same instance. To a degree it may be noted that this 'otherness' we perceive in the videated role creates a sense of an 'alter-ego double' as well as merely a 'mirror'. As Nedelkopolou reminds us 'both bodies are

complementary and correlative phenomena.’ (2010: 1) Isabella Pluta, writing in *Mapping Intermediality in Performance* (2010), refers to this phenomenon (that conflates the actor’s body, the digital presence and the metaphor they create) as the ‘mediaphoric body’.

The body is transformed and becomes host to a role through the configuration of multiple elements of the spectacle, a role other than that of the character. The role is born of the *coexistence* of different media. (2010: 192)

Pluta is making particular reference here to another of Lepage’s productions *The Andersen Project* (2005) and beyond his own practice this transformational process is clearly evident in the students study of *Seven Streams*. The students’ journal entries made at the time suggest an understanding of the renegotiation of role and character development within the intermedial *techno en scène*. One student wrote in their journal that it was important to ‘... grasp the concept that visual and dreamlike metaphors are more imperative when practicing Lepage’s work, rather than individual narratives.’ (2008) The earlier comment by the student playing the sex-worker illustrates their perception of role as a composition that cannot be entirely articulated by the physical body, requiring instead a collage of mediated processes.

This ‘mediaphoric’ composition was also noticeably realised in the final moments of the play where the female doctor attending the suicide of Jeffrey 1 transforms into a stereotyped, sexualised nurse persona offering her ‘services’ via a webcam. Created as the final moment of the play, the cinematically sized ‘mirror/alter-ego’ image of

her heavily made up face is projected behind the lifeless body of Jeffrey 1 whilst the live actor strides forward towards a seat in front of the camera; a poignant counterpoint between two

images of sexual identity. (Fig. 7)

The student who played this role noted the following in her journal: 'For the duration of the moment there was a split second where I was revealing the nurse's



Fig. 7

outfit whilst still wearing the doctor's coat and consequently I was performing simultaneous roles together.' (2008) This image articulates Lepage's notion of both *transformation* and *techno en scène*, as the metaphor is created in the transition of attire that is heightened and framed in voyeuristic terms upon the screen.

Both these examples hold the potential to phenomenalise what Leder refers to as 'social dysappearance' which brings its own performative and ethical challenges as it not only makes strange the relationship between role and videated 'other' but between the student performer themselves and the videated 'other' *and* the audience. Leder writes: '...there is (...) social dysappearance if we are held within an objectifying gaze, which makes us conscious of ourselves. If the 'other' is alienated from us we experience social dysappearance.' (1990: 96) For the performer as emergent sex-worker caught in the intimate gaze⁴² of the camera they (*and* the audience) may be aware of this objectifying gaze which transcends their role on

⁴² See **Bells and Meteorites** for further analysis of the intermedial gaze.

stage and phenomenalisises their own vulnerability as subject of the audiences' gaze. The issue of agency in this instance is acutely brought into focus. The actor may be very conscious in this moment of their 'present intention' (to cite Gallagher 2012) to perform the sexualized identity, but consciousness of their videated self also has the capacity to disrupt this intentionality and make them aware of their corporeal self, bringing attention back to their own body and its affect. This may have multiple outcomes that cannot be predicted as it depends upon the student performer. It may create a sense of vulnerability and/or empowerment, but the role of the videated 'double' unquestionably has a distinct effect and may profoundly affect those experiencing it. What may be experienced is a sense of mutual vulnerability, but this may be inclusive or exclusive. Correlating with Husserl's conception of 'original reciprocal co-existence' (1973), Leder refers to 'mutual incorporation' (1990: 94) in which we may, in co-present moments, experience beyond our bodies and the immediate experience as we 'get lost' in the event. Or we may experience a mutual dislocation, acutely conscious of our situated and sensorialised selves within the social theatre space. This brings to mind the metaphor of the 'in-between' spaces of Chapple and Kattenbelt and the spectacle pedagogy of Garoian and Gaudelius (2008). The spatial and temporal bridge between the physical and videated body creates a space that is 'conceptually and emotionally charged' (Garoian and Gaudelius 2008: 37) but this may generate intimacy and/or strangeness, both of which have unpredictable consequences.

The significance of the televisual image, as distinct from the filmic, must be revisited at this juncture, as the intimacy it creates is fundamental in configuring the role of

the 'double' and how it impacts upon the performer and the audience. Whilst the size of the image on the gauze may be seen as filmic in scale, the fact that the images were a live feed strongly denotes a televisual mode, as suggested in *Television: a not so brief intermission*. Considering Elleström's model (2010), we may ascribe live digital images as an operationally qualified aspect of television rather than film and that through this immediacy of the image we contextually denote an intimacy with what it portrays. Philip Auslander, in *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (1999) proposed the concepts of *immediacy* and *intimacy* as the essential properties of the televisual medium. He suggested that television was akin to theatre rather than film as it was 'characterized as a performance in the present.' (1999: 15) Television was therefore perceived by the viewer as 'immediate'. Auslander goes on to state: 'Television's intimacy was seen as a function of its immediacy.' (1999: 16)

This *immediacy* and *intimacy* are problematised however when the original object of representation (the live actor on stage in this instance) is simultaneously present with the 'live' video image. The complex relationship between the corporeal and the videated is emphasised by Nick Kaye in *Multi-Media: Video Installation Performance* (2007) when citing Samuel Weber he states: '...television's operation confuses the relationship between representation and its object, for in bringing events 'closer' television sets before the viewer not simply the reproduction of the distant object but a mode of perception.' (2007: 14) When juxtaposed with the live persona in theatre this new mode creates a distinguishable sense of the 'other'. The image on screen is not merely a larger scale version of the actor but a new representation that

is both imposing and intimate. The paradox of co-existent significance and vulnerability is seen to present itself again, as in the work of *imitating the dog*. Echoing Leder's conception of absence as a dual affirmation of absence *and* presence Matthew Causey writes (on the subject of the televisual incorporated into live performance):

The technological signifier and the human signifier's interplay can supply the performance with a fragmentation of here and not here, there and not there, and now and not now. What the televisual theatre displays is a schizophrenic distortion not only of time, but also of space and being. (Causey 2006: 38)

Taking into account the scale of the image alongside its live, televisual intimacy we can conceive of this performance mode as a hybrid of cine-theatricality and televisual performance as envisaged by Causey. Within the hypermedium of theatre (as indeed can be seen in wider culture) there is a deterritorialisation of the boundaries between cinema and the televisual as hybrids are created through the hypermedial condition of (re)framing media and the transmedial capacity to blur



Fig. 8

modal boundaries. In the creation and performance of the *Enola Gay* wives scenes (see Fig. 8) the group and I applied a more conventional cinematic device of

prerecorded material that generated its own complexities for the performers. In these scenes the close up footage of headshots was pre-recorded over a month before the performance and replayed alongside the physical presence of the four performers on stage whose heads had been obscured. This created a dislocated experience for the students involved and demanded a discreet range of skills but also a new way of perceiving their participation and sense of agency.

These scenes were the most obvious example of temporal dislocation as a performance standard for the on screen footage had to be reached well in advance of the live stage performances taking place on the night. In Lepage's process of *décalage* this is particularly complicated as the roles were still in flux a month before the show and so the students had minimal knowledge on which to base a persona which would eventually be part of their final performance assessment. Also, as can be seen from the photograph of the scene, the actors' faces were obfuscated from the *techno en scène* and remained relatively static as 'objects', relying on the screen to convey their role and (as it was an assessment) their demonstrable ability.

During final rehearsals in which the filmed image and the live were combined the students had a clearer sense of the *mediaphoric* quality of the role which was akin to the 'alter ego double' as the projected image was a confessional variant, designed to be distinct and at odds with the original female role as each admitted disquiet at what their partners and husbands had done on the *Enola Gay* mission. However there was concern from the students that they felt a certain degree of disenfranchisement as the filmic image was so dominant and they were relatively passive on stage. One student commented that: "I don't know what to do with

myself on stage. I'm just standing and I'm not sure if I acted well enough on screen in the first place." These issues resonate with the thoughts of Gavin Carver and Colin Beardon who wrote:

It is axiomatic that the inclusion of telematic technologies in performance destabilizes the definition of genre or form, for while liveness (immediacy, irreproducibility) may be a central feature of performance, digital technologies tend to mean the inclusion of projected, non-live, potentially repeatable elements, which in some work vies for hierarchical supremacy with the live performer. (2004: 174)

In this regard, our 'self effacing transitivity' (Leder 1990: 15) which allows us to become a receptive intermedium in theatre, creates tensions for a student performer as they sense their agency (SA1 *and* SA2) being ceded to the dominant filmic image which not only occupies a privileged position through scale but also through its capacity to limit the corporeal options for the performer on stage. For all of the 'mediaphoric', 'doubled' roles using the screen it required the actors to be aware of both their theatrical and filmic image at the same moment in time. Consideration had to be given to how they were positioned in the *techno en scène* and how they were framed on screen. To a degree, physical limitations had to be placed on movement and expression in order for the overall effect to work. Technical and filmic parameters arguably held sway over live actor autonomy at such moments and this was emphasised by the clearly visible paraphernalia of cameras, cables, vision mixers and so on. This caused some unease in rehearsal and took some

time for students to recalibrate their relationship to the space and their role in the production.

The educational implications of a multilayered and technological aesthetic in performance have been reflected upon by a selective number of academics over the last twenty years or so including Carroll, Anderson and Cameron. In 2006, in *real players? drama, technology and education* they sought to review Judith McLean's aesthetics of drama education, written in 1996, to take account of new digital cultures. They highlighted the importance of interactivity (over dialogue) with recognition that experiences would be shared but not necessarily in the same time or space. Processes may be non-linear and (resonating with the posthuman vision of performance) roles would not be bound by physical constraints. (Carroll et al. 2006: 52) Building upon this, the same authors in *Drama Education with Digital Technologies* (2009) propose that the filmic environment should be embraced by drama educationalists. They use the term 'kinaesthetic storyboarding' to describe the practical process of devising and shaping scenes to be filmed. Within this environment they argue that both the actors in front of the camera and those engaged in technical work can be perceived as both audience and performers. (2009: 194) They write: 'The student camera and sound operators when filming are percipients (audience) of the dramatic action and participants (creators) of the dramatic action at the same time.' (ibid) I would extend this analysis to suggest that those on stage, when performing alongside their 'double' are self-percipients, which is a role unique to intermedial performance modes. Whilst film actors or radio presenters may be able to watch/listen back to themselves performing it is only in an

intermedial mode that actors, and students in this case, can be conscious of their fragmented performative persona in real time, that is not just a copy of their performance when projected on to the screen, but a ‘mediaphoric’ and inter-subjective extension of it.

This perspective, echoing Lepage’s own *La Caserne* model of practice, begins to point towards a new way of perceiving agency and collaboration in a cine-theatrical paradigm. Although in *Seven Streams* the students were not assessed for discreet technical competencies, this approach from Lepage or Carroll, Anderson and Cameron directs us to an equal privileging of contributions or embodiments across media. In cine-theatrical practice this means a realisation that the filmic or televisual modes are on an equal performance footing to the physical performer *and* also that they offer unique pedagogical opportunities for students to construct new realities that are not bound by intramedial demarcations.

Reconsidering agency and collaboration in absence

The analysis so far has signaled that agency and collaboration are reframed within processes such as *Seven Streams*, as both a sense of control over your own corporeal self in the present moment *and* a sense of your contribution to the ensemble are problematised. Knowing that I was to include this case study of my own practice I was keen to garner the perspectives of other educators within higher education to discuss how they addressed the issues of agency and collaboration. In this section, drawing upon these professional observations, I propose a reconsideration of agency

and collaboration in work that engages in modes of *absence*, *dysappearance* and the 'double'.

Comments from my own students and observations I made about anxieties in the *Seven Streams* rehearsal space indicate that considerable significance is placed on the live event and that the need to control corporeal agency is particularly manifest at this point. To be restricted in this performance mode, as the *Enola Gay* performer noted, possibly creates a feeling of marginalisation almost to the point where ownership as well as agency are forfeited. This was reinforced in my 2012 interview with Russell Fewster who is the Program Director for the Media Arts Program (MBMA) and Lecturer in Drama and Film at the University of South Australia.

MC - How do you foster student agency and authorship over the work (students own performance roles in particular) when key aspects of their performance may be superimposed upon them by others?

Russell Fewster - A good question and it depends upon how much agency or authorship the students have over the project. With *Staging Second Life*⁴³ we lacked onstage monitors so the students depended upon direction in order to place themselves in appropriate proximity to the projected avatar on the scrim in front of them. This placed them in the

⁴³ *Staging Second Life* - a performance project led by Russell Fewster at UniSA in 2008 that incorporated Second Life avatars into live performance.

role of marionette (reflecting Gordon Craig's vision to some extent). The result was an aesthetically and dynamic stage picture, though for the students there was some frustration with the discipline required and the lack of their own authorship in their onstage placement. (March 2012)

Similarly, in my interview with Professor Andy Lavender, director of *Lightwork* and, at that time, Dean of Research at the Central School of Speech and Drama, the challenges of absence and presence came to the fore:

Andy Lavender - I have learnt, sometimes from bitter experience, that it matters very much that the actors are centered and have possession and ownership over the work they do (...) But having possession of the work doesn't necessarily mean that your corporeal body in front of a co-present audience is the thing you're displaying and therefore I'm inclined perhaps to relate the need here to connect the actor with the dramaturgy and the purpose of the *mise en scène*, rather than just a sense of self being available to be celebrated by an audience. (November 2010)

I also addressed the issue of presence and marginalisation in my interview with Greg Giesekam, the author of *Staging the Screen* (2007) and a Senior Lecturer at The University of Glasgow:

MC - My feeling is that actors in an intermedial rehearsal space have a sense that the presence of their body and the status of their physicality in performance gets lost a little. When actors and students work in this way do you think they have to give up a bit of themselves, and a bit of the kind of prominence of the actor as we usually think about it?

Greg Gieseckam – It depends on the nature of the work and in a sense you can flip it and say that yes sometimes the body can recede, due to the nature of projection, but in some work it can actually bring back a focus to the body by contrast with the mediated image. Other times no – the performer sometimes disappears into the whole mediated scape or mediascape I suppose. (December 2010)

Within these responses we can see the potential tensions working in this mode but also the opportunity to perceive the body in a new light, a 'sharp presence' as Nedelkopolou suggests. (2010: 1) Andy Lavender proposes that the virtual can be reconfigured as presence in his chapter *Mise en scène, hypermediacy and the sensorium* in *Intermediality in Theatre and Performance*. (2006) He writes that:

... performance can evoke presences through a variety of strategies that do not necessitate the concrete onstage appearance of the thing that is conjured. Certainly the virtual

can be spoken of in terms of presence. In D.A.V.E.⁴⁴ the virtual body is made present through projection, attaining materiality through its imposition on an actual body. (2006: 64)

This emphasises the thoughts of Gieseckam, Nedelkopolou and indeed the convictions of Andrew Quick from *imitating the dog* in that the lived body is not marginalised when the virtual body is present, but instead made all the more present and significant, ergo cine-theatrical intermediality fundamentally needs both. Russell Fewster in *Mapping Intermediality in Performance* (2010) refers to this distinct phenomenon as ‘intermedial presence.’ (2010: 64) However, to state that the actual presence is not marginalised is one matter; for a student to accept this is another challenge entirely.

At the heart of this dilemma, as indicated by Carroll, Anderson and Cameron (2006) are the issues of temporality and spatialisation. I would suggest that for students there is still a wide spread perception that the summative performance (the co-location and co-spatialisation with fellow performers and audience) is *the* significant ‘crucible’ that valorises their decision making and creation of role. My contention is that this must not be rejected but confidently renegotiated to enable a productive intermedial pedagogy to flourish. Temporal and spatial fragmentation must be seen as central features of collaboration in cine-theatrical practice as moments of performance are constructed in a myriad of moments that are ‘here and not here,

⁴⁴ D.A.V.E. - a performance work presented by Klaus Obermaier and Chris Haring in which a digital body is precisely mapped on to the physical body of Haring to produce a range of body morphing effects.

there and not there, and now and not now' to adopt Matthew Causey's expression. Paradoxically this type of intermedial practice demands key performance moments such as pre-recorded material to be captured well in advance but also it will only allow certain phenomena to realise themselves within the performance moment itself when the spectator is engaged.

We may wish to view this collaborative shift as posthuman in the sense that significance is moving away from the locus of the body, as we embrace our absence from certain performance temporalities and locations. To foster this attitude further, and potentially counter student concerns, it is opportune to bring back to the fore the conception of *enculturated intermediality*. It is interesting to note that within our media enriched lives we absent ourselves out into the world through the quotidian actions of *Facebook*, *Twitter* and so forth as a direct means of having agency over our identities and sense of self. We operate in an *ecstatic* mode on an almost constant basis as we 'stand out' from ourselves. In this regard many of us enthusiastically seem to embrace and are acclimatised to N. Katherine Hayles vision that: 'In the posthuman there are no essential demarcations between bodily existence and computer simulation.' (1999: 3) What is significant here therefore is not merely co-presence in time and space but an extended, transgressive sense of agency that operates as a virtual 'body schema' beyond our *Leib* or lived body as Husserl refers to it.

Correlating this with a constructivist model of learning, Bjørn Rasmussen reminds us that what is important is the 'taking part in the mediation of invested contributions.' (2010: 533) The 'taking part' is in durational terms across the whole of the process,

which in a Lepagean RSVP model incorporates the performance itself. In the *transformative techno en scène* performance, the structure and meaning are not fixed and students have the opportunity to find new inter-subjective insights as they perform afresh with their 'double'.

To summarise at this point, I suggest that agency and collaboration in intermedial terms must be seen to reside in *extra*-temporal and *extra*-spatial modalities as much as they operate in co-presence. To be truly present in the process and performance it may be proposed that you must relinquish the hierarchical position of corporeal, 'biological' presence (to use Hayles and Piper's term 2010) and embrace an enculturated intermedial presence in which past-presences and virtual presences have equal and infused signification. Inherent within this embrace is the Heideggerian conception of the present as Robert Cavalier reminds us: 'The present is made to come to pass in the sense of a 'making present' (...) Thus the present, in this authentic mode, arises out of other moments. It is never an isolated, discreet "now." (2012)

Finally, it is worth considering, that in such a paradigm, where time and space are deterritorialised, *intimacy* does not need to be relinquished, but reconfigured. Karen J. Prager (2004) distinguishes between 'intimate relationships' and 'intimate interactions' and whilst the former of these is predicated upon spatial and temporal continuity, consistency and duration, the latter is certainly a condition of intermediality. Bruce Barton, citing Prager, states: '...in the intermedial space, with its insistence on momentary intensity and complete attention, intimate *interaction* is unavoidable.' (2010: 46) He goes on to propose that intermedial intimacy is

generated through ‘the performance of shared perceptual frames and dynamics (interaction that posits ambiguity and de/reorientation as the constants of contemporary existence).’ (ibid)

Conclusion

Lepage’s own practice perhaps offers us both the methodology and the metaphor needed to validate this *process led* approach to learning in which the process itself deterritorialises linearity and singularity of space and time. The methodology, or perhaps counter-methodology, of *décalage* can be seen as a performative expression of a constructivist paradigm of learning as ‘actor, image, ‘text’, and audience are brought into a dialogue, a questioning, and an active co-constitutive role’. (Bunzli 1999: 89–90) In this regard the practice of Lepage, in his utilisation of the hypermedium of the theatre, resonates with Peter M. Boenisch’s conception of a medium as an ‘agency’ that is a multilateral ‘exchange of expression’, creating co-constructed ‘authentic’ realities. (2006: 105) We may note here how this also connects with von Glasersfeld’s constructivist rejection of an ‘objective, ontological reality.’ (1981: 11)

The apt educational metaphor in Lepage’s work can be seen in his thematic obsession with *transformation*, which releases his characters into extra-temporal and extra-spatial realms. Steve Dixon, referencing *Far Side of the Moon* (2000), notes how Lepage disrupts space and time for artistic and emotional effect:

Time is disrupted through abrupt space–time narrative shifts and childhood memory flashbacks; and time seems suspended or absent in timeless images of the vast, star-filled cosmos. The final image is overwhelming in its intense beauty and its sense of time and space suspension, as Lepage (and in later productions, Yves Jacques) lies foetus-like on stage, and takes a space walk in the stars. Projections reflected onto a huge angled mirror visually cast him into the twinkling sky of outer space, where he appears to float, weightlessly and timelessly. (2007b: 505)

Such a release from the significance of the ‘here and now’ presence is worthy of consideration in intermedial educational processes. Our sophisticated enculturated ‘body schema’ operates in a complex ‘cosmos’ in which moments of significance may be scattered amongst numerous temporal and spatial orbits.

Before we think this constellation is mapped however, it must be remembered how fine a line is trodden between, on the one hand a genuine sense of agency and collaboration and on the other a sense of dislocation and marginalisation. I am reminded at this point of two comments made by students, who reflected in their journals on the process of creating ‘mediaphoric’ scenes with ‘doubles’ late in the rehearsal stage. One wrote: ‘I understand that making performance right up to the last minute is exciting but it is also unnerving as I want to understand my characters and what they are saying.’ The second wrote: ‘There was an anxiety towards the marking criteria of embodiment of character, as some performers had months with a

character role and others had days.’ These students, along with several others, experienced a tension between developing a relationship with ‘doubles’ whilst also feeling engaged and connected with the ensemble. As I noted earlier in this chapter, there are pedagogical difficulties balancing ‘the intra-personal ‘intimacy of self’ and the inter-personal desire to be together and construct understanding as a collective’, particularly when time is finite in an assessed module structure. Exploring and absenting yourself into the ‘mediaphoric’ image absorbs time and collaborative focus, potentially to a point where the relationship with yourself as ‘other’ becomes the most significant interaction you may have on stage. This has implications for agency and collaboration that requires careful navigation by educators and students. Inter-subjective introspection may otherwise dominate at the expense of socially constructed narratives.

From a teaching perspective (and through my own experience) I would suggest that without careful planning the *techno en scène* process may place a temporary barrier on experiential learning as the process can become reduced to a slow, technical set of commands which may be instructive in terms of vocational skills but is limited in its capacity to develop new understanding of role or a sense of autonomy and authorship. Contextualising the process in advance so that students are aware of how the collage of media will interact is essential.

It is vital that students are given access during the devising process to a perspective on the overall *techno en scène*. By that I mean the time, technology (e.g. the playback of rehearsal footage) and analytical tools to step back from the on stage experience and critique what they are physically engaged in yet cannot fully

appreciate from within the space. It could of course be argued that this reflective practice is essential to all student work but I would contest that this is specifically an issue in intermedial study because the students are integrated into multiple layers of mediated material in which the defining, mutual affect can only be fully witnessed and comprehended from an audience or external perspective. Andy Lavender, when interviewed, reflected on this aspect of intermedial devising with film and live action:

For my money part of it is to be a witness as well as a participant. If you see, in other people in a workshop, the effect of a particular calibration of your torso for a camera for instance or to create a stage image that fuses architecture and people on stage and screen images then you need to see it to get it. (Nov. 2010)

Developing such awareness will heighten their capacity to be analytical ‘self-percipients’ of their own embodied experience and its relationship to the meta-illusion constructed intermedially. In the instance of *Seven Streams*, this process of reassurance was more reactive but students gradually became aware of the shift in how their roles were being constructed in the rehearsal process and how their own physical embodiment of character was only part of the overall portrayal of role.

For the most part, on reading back the range of student journal entries, the group seemed over time to be empowered by this process and perceived a degree of control over the authorship of their roles. However, I was alert at the time (and

remain so today) to the potential for disenfranchisement as the *techno en scène* approach risks obfuscating the actor as it foregrounds technology as an integral tool through which characters are drawn and narrative expressed. Patrice Pavis sombrely pronounced that in Lepage's work '...the body and the voice appear displaced in this technological device; they are like a foreign body in steel and plastic.' (2003: 189) Whilst I do not share his pessimism, I am conscious of the danger.

The ramification for pedagogy is in the realisation that such contemporary constructions of role require careful negotiation with the students and access to such pertinent pedagogies as those explicated in this study that can deconstruct and demystify their experience. It is essential to validate their virtual *and* their 'flesh and blood' presence so that they do not perceive themselves as merely mannequins to be placed by some external auteur, as alluded to as a risk by Russell Fewster in our interview. There needs to be pre-emptive recognition for the students that role is indeed reconceived in this mode of work and this requires anticipation on the educator's part so that the layering effect of intermediality can be contextualised. The traditional significance of the performer and the hierarchical status afforded to them is always in question in intermedial practice.

It is in this process that the specific intermedial concepts of hypermediality and the 'mediaphoric' body are key enabling tools to be articulated with students in order for them to recognise and interpret the nature of their role, how it is being authored and its place within a production. I would also propose that students' own enculturated intermedial experiences, as those identified by Lepage when referencing the audience's perspective, are overtly privileged and utilised within the

learning process. This enculturated intermediality is significant because students undoubtedly draw upon a complex web of sign systems that cross media borders and allow them to appropriate ideas from a multitude of sources.

There are risks and rewards when following a Lepageian methodology. The margin between cellophane-like disappearance and productive *dys*appearance is fine-grained. As I suggested earlier in the chapter, such an approach may never be a 'comprehensive substitute for the communal act in shared time and space' and may always feel insufficient for some practitioners and educators. There is undoubtedly the potential for a 'certain danger'⁴⁵ (as the actor Marie Gignac refers to *décalage*) but also, in its hypermedial embrace of multiple mediated forms, the potential to destabilise the hegemony of canonical works as encouraged by John Dewey. (1934, 2005) In returning again to the *spectacle pedagogy* of Garoian and Gaudelius it is worth noting the comparisons with *décalage*. They write: 'The potential of collage, montage, assemblage, installation, and performance art as critical pedagogy (...) lies in their dissonant spaces, at the contested borders that exist between their dissociative remnants.' (2008: 37) There are 'certain dangers' but also promises of transformation.

Well, I must endure the presence of two or three caterpillars if I wish to become acquainted with the butterflies.

(*The Little Prince*, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry 1943: 34)

⁴⁵ "Actors seem to enjoy the "sportive" approach to creation. Gignac states, "We like to put ourselves in that kind of situation - a certain danger." (Gignac 1995) in BUNZLI, J. (1999).

Bells and Meteorites

Preface

Bells and Meteorites: Pedagogy of realisation investigates the pedagogical potential of the hypermedial environment and the simultaneous experiences of immediacy juxtaposed with a meta-awareness of media processes. Through the central case study of *The Good Actor* by *Lightwork*, **analysis** and evaluation is presented on performance in which the actors and spectators are both immersed in the live, performative experience whilst concurrently and overtly being observed and then remediated into other digital forms. Research on surveillance theatre is utilised to consider the role media may play in reconfiguring our self-awareness in performance and the agency we possess as 'actors' within the world. Postdramatic theory is also drawn upon to contextualise and analyse students' expectations and anxieties about contemporary forms of role. From an educational perspective, this chapter foregrounds the critical constructivist writings of Joe L. Kincheloe.

Bells and Meteorites

Pedagogy of realisation

Work, which is calling into question its own forms and assumptions has a valuable function – it teaches us how to operate with agency within a highly mediated world.

(*The Open Work*, Umberto Eco 1989: 150)

Introduction

This final chapter seeks to explore something distinct from the first two case studies. Previously there has been a focus upon the situated experience of the (student) performer within the process and performance and their capacity to experience themselves as their lived body or ‘other’ within conceptual time and space. This chapter’s intention is to consider the potential for hypermediality to create a meta-awareness of self within a wider social environment and whether the individual’s experience of hypermediated performance can engender sensations of personal pleasure and social connectivity.

To facilitate the analysis of this paradigm I was fortunate to be invited by Professor Andy Lavender to observe the final rehearsal stages and performances of *The Good Actor* by his own company *Lightwork* at Hoxton Hall, East London in April 2011. The

observations and interviews within this period revealed the advantages and the anxieties that the hypermedium can uncover.

Lightwork: the company in context

Lightwork was founded in 1999 and is an artist led organisation established to create contemporary devised work. Their website states:

We make work that is pleasurable and thought-provoking.

We explore new modes of production and communication,
creating performances that are fresh, surprising and
innovative. (*Lightwork* 2013)

The artistic director for the company is Andy Lavender who was Dean of Research at the Central School of Speech and Drama (CSSD) during my time observing the company and is now Professor of Theatre and Performance and Head of the School of Arts at the University of Surrey. Alongside Andy there are several directors who lead projects including Bridget Thornborrow, Sarah Gorman and Jeremy Johnston. Throughout their history as a company they have always drawn upon a wide network of collaborators including academics such as Bella Merlin (who worked on *The Good Actor*), technologists and postgraduate students from CSSD. Lyn Gardner referred to *Lightwork* as a 'cash-strapped Lepage' (2005) and impertinent as that may arguably be it indicates the nature of their approach as their structure and ethics bear comparison to *Ex Machina* at *La Caserne*. From my research and personal experience, the company appears comfortable working in a collaborative style in

which different teams operate simultaneously and then combine to make decisions under the guidance of one artistic director.

The body of work they have produced to date clearly reflects their commitment to exploring new media and the relationships between the digital and the live presence. In 2002 the piece *London/My Lover* integrated physical performance and video to explore a visceral relationship between two lovers and the city. What is interesting to note is how the themes of the body, pleasure and sensation are central in *Lightwork* practice. The synopsis for *London/My Lover* is unequivocal in its delight in this:

London/My Lover is about the city made flesh and the body as a place of discovery. Made in London, it is a homage to the beauty, the dirt — the sheer presence of a modern metropolis. And it savours the erotics of desire, in a visual realm where every detail counts. (*Lightwork* 2013)

In the 2006 production *Here's What I Did With My Body One Day*, that explored notions of fate through the 'cursed' life of a Parisian man who's family had been responsible for some renowned road accident victims including Roland Barthes, the centrality of human emotion is clearly identifiable. Joyce McMillan wrote in *The Scotsman* that it was '... a brilliant demonstration of the power of abstract and formally sophisticated theatre when it's put at the service of a compelling narrative, a fine script and an emotional situation quietly powerful enough to break the heart.' (11/2/06) John Peter, in *The Sunday Times*, enthused that it was 'radiating humanity'

(5/2/06) whilst Donald Hutera in *The Times* considered it to be '...a model of how to place technology at the service of a production.' (13/1/06) However, as with reviews of Lepage and *imitating the dog*, the company have also been criticised for their work being too calculated and lacking emotion. *The Guardian* critic Lyn Gardner, whilst praising the piece in many respects, did note that: 'There are times when the whole thing feels over-constructed and a little too cold — as if it can't quite locate its own heart.' (13/10/05)

Their last two productions, including *The Good Actor* (2010/11) share similar themes of observation and surveillance. In 2009 the company produced a version of *The Tempest* that was performed at The Gdansk Shakespeare Festival.

The project explored the use of surveillance technology and contemporary media. *The Tempest* features journeying and return, confinement and release. It deals with power, observation and control. Such motifs lend themselves to the habits and technologies of contemporary surveillance, with its cameras, recording devices, monitors and tracking systems. (...) We explored the notion that Prospero (himself displaced) sees and controls everything from a central location. (*Lightwork* 2013)

Implicit in this explication of *The Tempest* is a recurring interest in the hypermedial potential of theatre to expose the diverse media involved, not merely as a formal aesthetic but as a central thematic for the piece. In this context, Andy Lavender's

own reflections upon *The Tempest* offer a useful comparison and will be drawn upon within the chapter. The hypermedial constructs within the production resonate with those of *The Good Actor*.

To observe *The Good Actor* in rehearsal and performance modes offered a productive opportunity to analyse a collaborative process in which live and digital personae were combined, not to create a polished ‘theatricalised film’ vision as in *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls*, but to utilise technology in disrupting our relationship to ourselves and the social environment in which we live.

A (less than) melodramatic entrance: setting the scene

The production of *The Good Actor* had been in development since 2008 and already had a web presence in existence, echoing the extra temporal and extra spatial parameters discussed in the previous chapter. The production was envisaged in three-stages: *Theatre, Video, and Installation* that began life in workshops at the National Theatre Studio and CSSD. (see Fig. 9) The company describe this original *theatre* stage as follows:

The Good Actor is a three-hander that also features technicians onstage. It is staged in a wrap-around mediascape. Its central character is a successful actor. He is in discussion with a production company about being in a celebrity reality-TV show – we see the behind-the-scenes negotiations, which are darkly funny. He is starring in a BBC

biopic of Henry Irving, the celebrated nineteenth-century actor-manager. We see him learning melodrama techniques (fun and fascinating to watch), and we see parts of *The Bells*, the melodrama through which Irving shot to fame, staged for specific camera shots – so, live and also onscreen. (*Lightwork* 2013)

In July 2010 the work developed with some improvised ‘micro-videos’ placed online



Fig. 9

which continued to experiment with the question of what may be considered acting or pretence. The videos developed the fake persona of John Matthews (the ‘good actor’) although ‘John’ himself

never appeared on screen.

The *installation* element of the piece was what brought me to Hoxton Hall in East London in April 2011. I had interviewed Andy Lavender at CSSD in November 2010, during which he had explained aspects of the piece, but on arriving at the venue I knew very little of how the company were to utilize the space or progress rehearsals leading up to the performances which were part of the *Digital Stages* festival 2011. As alluded to in the title for this section, my entrance was less than the melodramatic genre deserved as several of us were locked out of the venue for a good while. However, on entering the space we were greeted by an evocative Victorian theatre space and labyrinth of corridors and anterooms that would be

exploited for the production. The assembled cast and crew was extensive, numbering over twenty, and included performers from CSSD but also professional actors, workshop leaders and a technical crew heavily laden with cameras, monitors, projectors and hundreds of metres of cabling, akin to the production space of *imitating the dog*.

An initial discussion with Andy clarified that the piece would be an immersive experience for the audience as they were to be

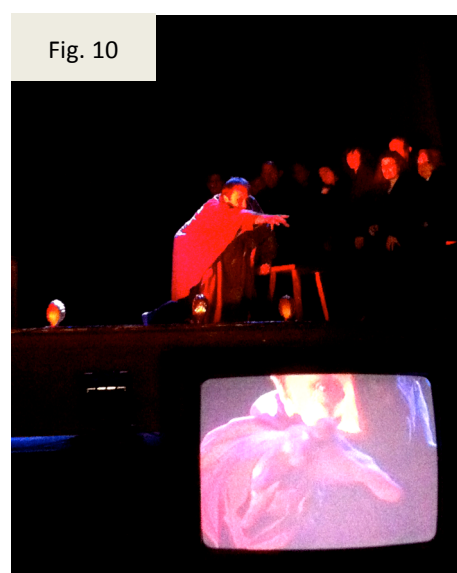


Fig. 10

led in groups around various spaces within the building, framed as performers preparing for a role until finally they would be unleashed on to the stage of Hoxton Hall during a performance of the court scene from *The Bells*. (see Fig. 10) In this scene John Matthews (played by the actor David Annen) is 'starring' as the accused Mathias, who is charged with killing the 'Jew

Koveski' and the audience are 'in role' as the jurors. What the 'jurors' immediately realize is that the scene is being filmed for some documentary purpose (although its fakeness is not immediate) by a range of camera operators and also witnessed by another audience group from up on the balcony in the main auditorium. There is no one else in the theatre except technicians and fellow audience as observers. The *Lightwork* website offers this outline of the event:

Through a series of stations, the spectator encounters the stuff of acting – the preparation, the physical and vocal work,

the moments of quiet focus prior to the cue, and the actor onstage in mid-performance. This compelling central turn is re-encountered in a live mashup in a multimedia viewing room, where performance and spectatorship, theatre and media, witness and experience are fused. (*Lightwork* 2013)

The 'mashup' element refers to the continuous documentation of the event at each 'station', capturing the audience-as-

actors⁴⁶ in photographs and video.

These are then played back or streamed live (as you were able to watch other groups as the jurors) on large screens alongside footage of the



Fig. 11

'John Matthews' documentary. (see Fig. 11) At no point during the performance is it made overtly clear if the persona of Matthews is real or not. Whilst the printed programme does outline the cast, including Annen, there is more page space allocated to a biography of Matthews. So, in the performance environment, we are left in an ambiguous hinterland between reality and fiction.

The installation was both an intensely immersive experience for the audience-as-actors as they were positioned in a dual layer of role (participant in workshops *and* juror) throughout the piece, but also it had the capacity to critically distance the

⁴⁶ I would note that the *audience-as-actor* mode is distinct from Augusto Boal's notion of a spect-actor as there was limited agency to react and alter the sequence of events in *The Good Actor*.

audience from their own experience as they sensed a growing awareness of being observed, documented and remediated.

Hypermediality in the context of *The Good Actor*

The hypermedium of theatre, as identified by Chapple and Kattenbelt (2006), has an almost infinite capacity to (re)frame other media within its structures both as a technical *and* qualified medium. In cine-theatrical forms this creates a complex web of modalities and qualifying aspects that can engender either 'transparent immediacy' and/or 'hypermediacy', the 'two logics' of remediation as described by Bolter and Grusin (1999). In this section I will briefly revisit some of the qualities of film and television to consider their artistic and pedagogical potentialities as they occur in the hypermedium of theatre alongside live performance.

If it may be said, as I suggested earlier in **Mapping Constellations**, that the work of *imitating the dog* or Lepage explores the phenomenon of transparent immediacy through the illusory intimacy of film, then the practice of *Lightwork*, and in particular *The Good Actor*, pays greater attention to the potential of hypermediacy. Both instances paradoxically are inherently intermedial but whilst *imitating the dog* or Lepage fuse media aesthetics, *Lightwork* find interplay and 'mutual affect' in the overt juxtaposition of media. Kattenbelt notes that this ability for theatre to stage other digital media accentuates its intermedial potential: '...as components of a live performance, film, television and video recordings are not only screened, but also and at the same time staged (...) Thus, because theatre is the art of staging *pur sang*

it becomes pre-eminently a stage of intermediality.’ (2006: 37) This staging of filmic and televisual media alongside the live, however, retains the modalities of these media so that in such practice there is interplay and tension between the overarching hypermediacy and the transparent immediacy of specific media.

Piscator, along with other practitioners in the early years of cinema, recognised the potential for this dialectic relationship between our perception of the stage and the filmic images, to create a heightened awareness of reality. (Gieseke 2007) Ironically as Stanley Cavell (1979) and Kattenbelt have identified, film is an ‘illusion of reality’. (Kattenbelt 2006: 37) Yet still, along with television, it is perceived as ‘projecting’ a significant degree of verisimilitude that heavily informs our cultural values. As Bazin noted, film has attained a ‘quality of credibility’ (2005: 8) that is constructed on its capacity for transparent immediacy. Bolter and Grusin wish to remind us though that: ‘the logic of transparent immediacy does not necessarily commit the viewer to an utterly naïve or magical conviction that the representation is the same thing as what it represents.’ (1999: 30) They suggest that this ‘naïve’ view is something that we acquiesce to as it forms a ‘historical desire’ (31) to see things as they really are or as we think they are.

When perceived in isolation from other media, film or television may be regarded as ‘transparent digital applications’ as Bolter and Grusin refer to them (53) that ‘seek to get to the real by bravely denying the fact of mediation.’ (ibid) However, in an intermedial environment such as *The Good Actor* (in which multiple screens, monitors, cameras and cables are on show) their mode shifts so they become ‘digital hypermedia’ that ‘seek the real by multiplying mediation so as to create a feeling of

fullness, a satiety of experience, which can be taken as reality. Both of these moves are strategies of remediation.’ (53)

This sense of ‘a satiety of experience’ is derived, in part, from the shifts in perception that are demanded of us as our attention fluctuates or is at times overwhelmed by our embodied experience as audience-as-actors in tandem with a growing awareness of the digital presence in the venue in which we played a central part. The modalities of the live and digital presences, it must be remembered, are often quite distinct. For example, the sense data from film is predominantly visual and aural whilst during the installation at Hoxton Hall the ‘biological body’ experienced an olfactory and tactile relationship with other bodies in the cramped and musty workshop spaces. Spatially and temporally as audience-as-actors we are firmly grounded in the real space of the hall and the fixed sequentiality of the workshops as

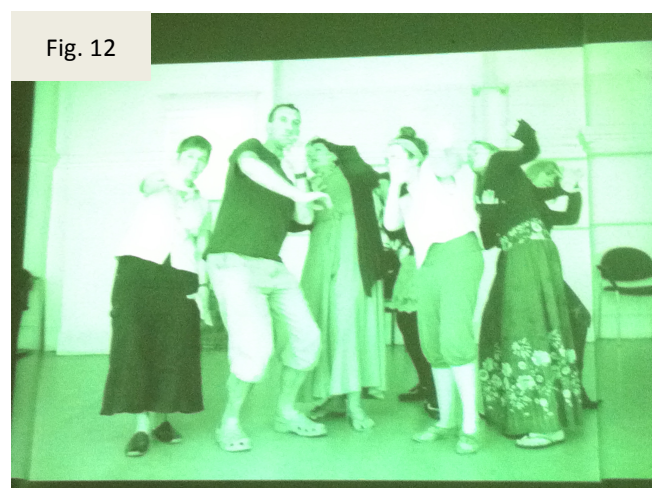


Fig. 12

we are led around. However, when arriving on stage and then in the media room we are suddenly exposed to the dislocations of space and time as the wider parameters of the piece and the illusion are

exposed. As Robert E Wood (2001) reminds us, film, more than any other medium demands and activates our perception of a virtual world beyond the frame, perceiving spatial and temporal realms that are inferred to us. What was initially an immersive and seemingly exclusive experience for a small group of us, sharply

becomes a media saturated phenomenon that has clearly had a performance trajectory (in the mock documentary and the capturing of images from within the workshops and stage scene) in existence for a significant amount of time. The temporal and spatial parameters expand exponentially in our perception as we see our intimate workshop experiences epically relocated on the large media screens. (see Fig. 12)

This hypermedial experience challenges our 'historical desire' to acquiesce to the lure of the digital image and the illusion of transparent immediacy. We are confronted by the temporally breathtaking capacity for digital media to remediate our life experiences. Indeed we are challenged to question our 'naïve' assent to transparent immediacy as we witness the 'convincing' documentary of John Matthews almost immediately after departing the 'counterfeit' stage on which he was performing. Live images from the next group of 'jurors' on stage are simultaneously screened live alongside the documentary and stills from the workshops, so we are faced with opaque distinctions between real and fake. In the programme notes *Lightwork* clearly seek to destabilise such notions when they state that they want to test some propositions, including:

- The camera sees things better, differently, selectively.
- The fact that something is remediated – figured again through another medium – can make it more immediate and more manipulable.
- Things can be thought to be authentic
 1. when you know they happen

2. when they happen to you
 3. when you feel them
 4. when you see them again
- Truth and trust are staples of performance.
 - Mediation helps create our memory of an event.

(Lavender 2011)

Whilst the audience had a visceral memory of the event that had just occurred, they were immediately conscious of it being rewritten by the digital media. *The Good Actor* revelled in this 'mashup' wherein the immersive experience and our interpretation of that experience (meta-awareness) collided. For my own part, I would liken the experience to coming up for air from underwater only to realise that someone else had been holding your head down in the water all the time. Yet for all that, it was oddly pleasurable, as indeed *Lightwork* might wish it to be. Andy Lavender himself has specifically stated that in exploring the live/digital hypermedium of theatre he is interested in '... the ways in which their very co-relation produces effects of immediacy that are deeply involving – more, deeply pleasurable – for spectators.' (2006: 56)

The centrality of observation (of self and others) and the awareness of this observational gaze correlate with recent reflections on surveillance theatre. In the past two years Elise Morrison and Andy Lavender have written about the growing trend to manipulate the gaze of the spectator so that they become a central co-constituent of meaning making within the piece. This can be seen in *The Good Actor* as the audience are prompted to observe their own actions and also the intimate

performance moments of others including the intense close ups of John Matthews/ David Annen as he pleads down the lens for his life in the court scene of *The Bells*.

Morrison, in her chapter *Wireless Protection? Surveillance Technologies in Theatrical Performance* in *Theatre Topics: Bastard or Playmate* (2012) critiques the absorption of surveillance technology and its epistemology within performance with particular reference to Shunt Collective's *Contains Violence* (2008). This show placed the audience on the roof terrace of the Lyric Hammersmith theatre in order to observe the office block across the road within which various lurid and grotesque vignettes played out amongst the characters. Citing this work and others such as *The Builders Association's Super Vision* (2007) in which the data-trails of characters are traced on screen, she identifies the potential of such practice:

In these productions, surveillance technologies emerge as effective theatrical tools to foreground, reformulate and challenge practices of watching and being watched. By bringing surveillance technologies into traditional theatre spaces, surveillance theatre artists not only ask their audiences to reflect upon disciplinary practices of surveillance society, they also bring questions of watching and being watched to bear on habitual processes of representation and reception in theatre. (2012: 122)

Andy Lavender reflected on his own *Lightwork* production of *The Tempest* in his article *Watch this (actual and virtual) space: Surveillance, dis/location and transit in*

Shakespeare's The Tempest (2012), in which he underlines the significance of surveillance in contemporary paradigms of performance and their capacity to implicate the viewer as voyeur. He wrote: 'The notion that we are living in a 'surveillance society' has become if anything more widespread in tandem with the increased sophistication of computer and media technologies.' (2012: 143) Citing the work of John McGrath (2004) he indicates that 'surveillance space is both phenomenological and performative, in that it implicates the viewer or auditor, and perhaps differently, the object of the gaze.' (ibid)

To summarise at this juncture, it may be proposed that the hypermedium as experimented with in *The Good Actor*, reveals pleasures and problems for the participant observer or as I have referred to it in this context the audience-as-actor. The revelation in the exposure of the media and their technical modalities, be that in the affect of the stage acting seen up close or the numerous technical processes and personnel required to mediate a televisual image, creates a Socratic paradox of knowing and not knowing. To borrow the role of the Mesmerist from the play (who attempts in the court scene to mesmerise Mathias into revealing the truth) as a metaphor, we the participants are mesmerised by what appears to be truthfulness in the seeming abandonment of pretence and the exposure of mediated reality. At the same time we are aware, on some level, that what is being exposed is in its own right carefully constructed and mediated. The revelation of knowing what is occurring is built upon an acute acceptance of our not knowing. Or we may say that our meta-awareness of our experience is actually, as Merleau-Ponty would remind us, an awareness of how situated we are in our own mediated experience.

Realisatory pedagogy in a hypermedial environment

In **Intermedial pedagogy: a work in progress** it was noted that certain writers had identified the potential for an multimodal and intermedial pedagogy to stimulate a meta-awareness of what is being learnt and the cultural context in which it is being learnt. Amy Petersen Jensen has promoted a pedagogy 'that focuses the student learner's attention on the pervasive media in ways that allow for the meta-awareness of and reflection on patterns and relationships among the students' bodies, contemporary modes of entertainment, and mediums that convey those modes.' (2008: 24) This process of realisation, she believes, will enable students to develop their agency over the learning and the culture of which they are a part. She writes: 'I am interested in students becoming active participants in local and global conversations. These students are prepared producers and active transformers or creators of the knowledge that surrounds them.' (2008: 25) Asunción López-Varela Azcárate and Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek (2008) propose that intermediality can be used as the framework for a radical pedagogy that creates new understandings about and between cultures. They highlight the significant developments in technology and the powerful discourses encoded within them that envelop us every day. They write:

Technologies produce relational positions of greater or lesser privilege through regulating the flow of intermedial discourse in particular ways. The materiality of media is already culturally encoded and bears a certain institutional validation prior to specific content being transmitted. In this way,

people's lives are spent shaping and responding to new material media and artefacts. New media do not replace or substitute prior technologies but it creates new intermedial configurations of the whole social and economic system of media. (2008: 68-69)

They cite Bolter and Grusin's concept of remediation (1999) to emphasise the flow of knowledge and reframing of media as a perpetual act that needs constant reinterpretation. In their conclusions they argue that the 'essentialism' of modernity and the 'futility' of postmodernity must give way to a resistant and participatory pedagogy in which the relationship between the subject and the media 'hinges on the notion of becoming. Becoming holds an «in-between» space, a gap between absence and presence that invites an analysis to the process of intermediality in terms of philosophies of difference (Derrida, 1967) as an opening up but also a crossing-over.' (2008: 78)

Hypermediality potentially creates this 'in-between' space, as it overtly reveals the fissures between media and foregrounds our own place as an intermedium receiving, interpreting and recoding information from the variety of sources. Hypermediality, it may be argued, exposes the invisible *inter* of media discourse that we often ignore or fail to notice in our 'desire' for immediacy. Developing an awareness of this intermedial discourse, the impact it has upon our lives and the agency (or otherwise) we have within it is of pedagogical relevance.

Joe L. Kincheloe's conception of critical constructivism echoes the significance of this cognisant disposition to new media. In *Critical Constuctivism Primer* (2005) he outlines key questions to be asked by educators and students:

- How are one's constructions of the world shaped?
- Are one's psychosocial dispositions beyond one's conscious control?
- Does one simply surrender one's perceptions to the determinations of one's environment, one's social, cultural context?
- What does this process of construction have to do with becoming an educated person? (2005: 8)

In order to respond to these questions Kincheloe proposes that we must recognise the situated nature of our existence and perceive ourselves 'as a social being in light of the way dominant power operates to manage knowledge.' (9). To develop this critical stance Kincheloe, along with co-author Shirley R. Steinberg, offer a new mode of thinking, which they refer to as 'post-formal thinking' (1998: 7) in which there are resonances with the themes of vulnerability and fragility as positions of empowerment. He writes: 'Post-formal thinking is concerned with questions of meaning, self-awareness, the nature and function of the social context. (...) When teachers and students gain a post-formal perspective, they grow more comfortable with complexity and the uncertainty and ambiguity that accompany it.' (ibid)

Returning to Bolter and Grusin's construct of hypermediacy they too perceive its 'social dimension' (1999: 70) and therein they identify an epistemological *and* a psychological dimension to the phenomenon.

In its epistemological sense, hypermediacy is opacity – the fact that knowledge of the world comes to us through media. The viewer acknowledges that she is in the presence of a medium and learns through acts of mediation or indeed learns about mediation itself. The psychological sense of hypermediacy is the experience that she has in and of the presence of the media; it is the insistence that the experience of the medium is itself an experience of the real. (70 – 71)

It is evident therefore that a hypermedial rehearsal and performance environment is a potentially fertile pedagogical paradigm to enable learners to critically and sensorially explore and question media discourses and their place as an intermedium within them. Such an environment is, in Kincheloe and Steinberg's view, a productive site of primary research wherein students can engage in 'phenomenological studies of human consciousness and the meanings individuals give to certain phenomena...' (1998: 4)

Phenomenology is an interesting philosophical stance to reference in such a proposal as there are possible tensions in reconciling phenomenological and constructivist perspectives on our experience of and agency within the world. In principle, developing a meta-awareness of our self in our cultural context seems a valid and purposeful goal. However, this is perhaps difficult to reconcile with a phenomenological view that we are perpetually only able to perceive the world from within ourselves and hence an objective view on 'things in the world' is perhaps beyond us. In *The World of Perception* Merleau-Ponty reminds us: 'What then have

we learned from our examination of the world of perception? We have discovered that it is impossible, in this world, to separate things from their way of appearing.’ (2004: 94)

Does this mean then that a critical stance of meta-awareness is beyond our reach? Perhaps it is opportune here to recall the paradox of knowing and not knowing. In other words we may consider, as significant, an awareness of the situated state we are in. In identifying these knowing and not knowing states it is also important to underline the gradations between them and so we may view meta-awareness as a process of becoming that is always in transition. If a phenomenological stance is taken then we self evidently cannot ‘stand outside’ of ourselves and critique a unified ontological reality but what we may move towards is a critical stance on the phenomena that appear before us. They will always appear to us as they are in themselves but our intentionality towards them can be disrupted or questioned. The purpose of my hammering, to once more borrow Heidegger’s metaphor, or the reference I may unconsciously make between the (inter)subject before me and the recognition or recollection image (to cite Deleuze) I correlate it to may be disrupted, however briefly. Hypermediality fosters the conditions for a ‘disturbance of the senses’ as Groot Nibbelink and Merx refer to it. (2010: 219) In this disturbance is the potential for realisation that we are *within* the flow of media. They are not merely technical constructs through which we consume entertainment but qualified media that are defined by and in themselves define the culture of which we belong. As Bolter and Grusin have noted, we are not ‘naïve’ in the face of media and can distinguish between the thing itself and what it represents. In recalling Elleström we

may move towards a more nuanced conception of 'appearance' as Merleau-Ponty refers to it. Appearance is both a sensorial and spatio-temporal experience but this can be distinguished from an understanding of (or at least a realisation of) the contextually qualified aspects of a medium/intermedia. In everyday life these aspects are conflated whilst in the hypermedium they may be contrasted.

The question remains however whether this is always achievable or desirable in a theatrical mode of learning. To respond to these issues it is important to return to the experience of the creators and performers in *The Good Actor*, with a particular focus upon the students and ex-students from CSSD who played the ushers and Mesmerists.

'Realising' the hypermedial potential of The Good Actor

Andy Lavender undoubtedly had a theoretical overview of the work and the discourse that may be had through creating and experiencing it. He overtly referred to the 'mediatisation' process when preparing the performers for *The Good Actor* installation at Hoxton Hall and also how the work would 'remediate' the audience's experience, particularly in the final media station. But how did this tally with the experience of the performers and what type or degree of 'realisation' were they cognisant of? As was found with *imitating the dog* and *Seven Streams* there is the potential for shared *and* disconnected visions within a project such as this.

On meeting the actors playing the Mesmerists⁴⁷, all of whom were postgraduate students or recent postgraduates from CSSD, it was clear that they were well trained and well versed in performance skills and performance history. However, many of them had less experience of intermedial and hypermedial environments and few, if any, had worked closely with *Lightwork* on other projects. There is immediate evidence of this in their response to Andy's initial precursory speech about mediation in the piece. In my notes at this point I wrote:

The word mediatisation is discussed. "Is it too jargony?" someone asks. Other terms to put in the preamble to the audience are considered. "What about 'digital age'?" someone else suggests. Actors are a little unsure how 'jargony' to be. After Andy refers to remediation one of the actors, Michelle, asks "Why?" There seems to be different languages here. Michelle then tries her opening speech in front of a group of us. "Hi, I'm Michelle and today you'll be seeing ... (she stops) Today we live in a mediatised world..." She stops again. She is not sure how to phrase or frame the talk and is unsure what trope to adopt when 'playing' herself.

(24/4/11)

On a humorous note, the performers' unease with the terminology was more than evident in my interview with Hannah. At one point I asked her:

⁴⁷ There were five performers playing the Mesmerist role: Hannah Banister, Jacqueline Coombs, Jessica (Jess) Jordan-Wrench, Alicia Radage and Michelle Roche. I interviewed all of them individually except Jacqueline who was part of a group interview. All of them gave consent to use their real names in the case study.

MC - What is your take on words like mediatised? What do they mean to actors?

Hannah – It doesn't really interest me at all but I'm a technophobe. I haven't got a *Mac* and cut and paste is my limit, but I didn't understand mediatised. I couldn't get my head round that and I actually said the word mediarated, remediarated. Sounds a bit like meteorite. (April 2011)

However, it is worth noting that Jess was more familiar and conversant with the ideas proposed by Andy. I asked her about terms such as mediatised and if she felt she understood these terms in this context, to which she replied: "I originally come from an academic background so for me I find it really exciting (...) My dissertation was on liveness."

As I observe over the next few days I notice that the Mesmerist actors in this environment share a similar experience to those in *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls*. Their role in the piece is pivotal but arguably functional in many respects. The focus on this mode of performance is found when reading rehearsal notes⁴⁸ from the final stages leading up to Hoxton Hall. One note for the Mesmerists⁴⁹ states: 'Possible duties for Mesmerists: Housekeeping, provide audiences/participants with basic info about piece, usher, keep track of toilette (*sic*) breaks and general occurring issues.' (28/3/11) Throughout the rehearsal report specific operational challenges are

⁴⁸ *Lightwork* made summative rehearsal notes available to me via email in the months leading up to the Hoxton Hall production.

⁴⁹ The CSSD students took on the role of ushers for each audience group and then played the role of the Mesmerist in the scene from *The Bells*.

identified from how to use the media to what aspects of live sound would be feasible. There is one note alluding to the nature of the Mesmerists performance which, under the heading 'Things to work out', simply reads: 'Characterisation of Mesmerists / Matthias', to which I could find no specific follow up for the Mesmerists. As with *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls*, this is a destabilising environment for performers trained in a traditional skills set. During the rehearsal period Andy speaks to the students on a regular basis but his notes are instructional rather than relating to character or personification. I note that for a good proportion of the time Andy busies himself with organising the 'aesthetic of the installation' (as I refer to it) down to the fine details of 'fixing wobbly tables, checking exits.'

In interviews with the students they seemed to draw several key distinctions between modes they adopted in the piece and, in constructing their own understanding of the installation, they often drew upon traditional acting processes. Several of them distinguished between acting and performance. For some, the specific role of the Mesmerist was definitely acting as it created a construction of a fictional role other than themselves. Jess was clear in her opinion that:

If it doesn't sound too pretentious, the bit on stage is when you're acting but the rest of the time it's more facilitating the experience of the audience. (...) I've asked people about the Mesmerist and some have said it's acting and others have said no because it's a self-conscious thing within a fiction. I think its still acting as that kind of absorption is not a prerequisite for acting. (April 2011)

Hannah distinguished between the usher role and the Mesmerist.

MC – How would you describe your performance?

Hannah – Well I'd like to think that I'm not acting when I'm taking people round ... that I'm as approachable as possible.

(...) I don't like acting a version of myself. I don't like that idea.

MC – So when you hit the stage, what is that?

Hannah – That's full on acting. (April 2011)

However, other performers perceived a level of self-consciousness in the Mesmerist role, which shifted the modes of experience and execution. Alicia stated: "When I'm the Mesmerist I'm aware I'm in an excerpt of the play." She refers to the fact that we are all (as actors or audience-as-actors) aware of the technology and technicians rather than a traditional audience out in the auditorium "...which is why it's performing as you're aware of all of those things. (...) You've got circles of attention; you're aware of the cameras and that it's mediated and you're going to bring those people in to see it. So you're aware of camera angles and you're aware of the crowd and aware of the audience up there in the gallery." (April 2011)

Some of them articulated the function of the digital element in terms of how it enhanced the live aspects of performance. Alicia seemed to suggest that technology had the capacity to revitalise theatre forms: "We're here to assess what are the qualities of a live performance in a digital age, so you're putting people in that outdated old fashioned melodrama but you're also saying look at what technology

can bring to it.” (April 2011) In reference to the media station her view echoes that of Erika Fischer-Lichte (2004) in that the absence of the live body, however briefly, actually reinforces its centrality to theatre. Her enthusiasm for the reveal of the final station was very evident when she stated:

The media room shows to me how precious live performance is, to be able to capture it and then to edit it so close to the event and you can never ever get the feeling - *a.* being on stage *b.* preparing for a live performance *c.* leaving the stage and *d.* the room before you're about to go on stage, but because that moment's so precious when they come off stage and see themselves it's like wow – look what technology can do for live performance. We're looking at live performance whilst swimming in a digital age. (April 2011)

I am aware as I cite the words of these actors that they are at postgraduate or even post-postgraduate level so their heightened capacity for self-reflection must be taken into account. Yet it is still interesting to observe their sophisticated awareness of the difference that the media makes to the experience and indicates the potential of the hypermedial environment to construct some forms of undergraduate and postgraduate meta-awareness about our mediated society and how we 'swim' within it. A sense of the digital media's purpose may have been different for each performer I interviewed, but its capacity to reveal something and to make the experience strange for the participants is notable. Hannah is equally as enthusiastic as Alicia about the media station and identifies its capacity to reframe the real:

MC - What about the final room?

Hannah – I think it's great when I'm on stage I don't think about it but when I go next door there I'm like God that's a nice pay off, a surprise. I think that it's an achievement and it's a surprise.

MC – Do you think people are flattered that they are digitized, as if we become television stars?

Hannah – It's like when we've come off a rollercoaster at a theme park and you think someone's taken our picture, let's have a look at our picture. You've experienced something real when you've experienced something big and physical that you've not experienced before – how do I look like experiencing that? (April 2011)

Whilst Andy and his teams intention was not, to my knowledge, focused on structuring a hypermedial learning environment, I would contest that these performer reflections indicate that the propositions placed in the programme notes do indeed have the capacity to prompt reflection and an awareness of knowing and not knowing. In Alicia and Hannah's comments the transparent immediacy of the digital image seems for them to foreground the 'realness' of the live experience and that the events take on a new mode of authenticity when we see them again. But their perspective is certainly not 'naïve' as they are able to reflect beyond the spectacle and surprise of the filmic image and consider its affect.

The construct of the hypermedium is therefore theoretically profitable in pedagogical terms. However, constructs are not always applicable in real-world scenarios and the unease some of the actors felt in ‘functioning’ within the performance modes created by the directors must be acknowledged. Here again are the recurring themes of instability and deterritorialisation as evidenced in *imitating the dog* and *Seven Streams*. In this instance I would propose that it is the pervading state of self-consciousness that is potentially problematic for this paradigm.

For the Mesmerists⁵⁰ the instability was predominantly caused by the performance of self as usher and the perceived inferiority of this role in comparison to the heightened performance/acting role of the Mesmerist. The notion of awareness that I have proposed as desirable to prompt reflective learning can also create barriers and potential limitations on the experience and what may be gleaned from it. In the interviews the term ‘acting’ was given more credence as a skill and as a mode compared to their use of the term ‘performance’ or ‘being yourself’. Whilst there is no necessity for hypermediated performance to focus on roles with limited fictional construction, it is more likely that the mediated act of performance will be revealed to the audience. The performer’s task in such instances is to expose the transparent immediacy or at least they are consciously within a *techno en scène* that is exposing it on their behalf.⁵¹ This postdramatic turn towards embracing and analysing non-fictional as well as fictional portrayals on stage led to Michael Kirby coining the terms ‘acting’ and ‘non-acting’ (1987) between which there is a spectrum of performance

⁵⁰ It may also be noted that some of the experienced professionals leading the workshops in role as ‘self’ also found this mode difficult at times and needed reassurance from the group that their delivery style was appropriate.

⁵¹ Recent professional work that illustrates this style includes Katie Mitchell’s *The Idiot* (2008), *The Builders Association’s Jetlag* (2009) and *The Wooster Group’s Hamlet* (2007/2012).

levels. The ushers in *The Good Actor* can be seen to fall into Kirby's category of 'non-matrixed' performance, which does not require integration into a fictional play context. Depending on how they perceive their performance as the Mesmerist this element may fall into either 'simple' or 'complex' acting. In *Postdramatic Theatre* Hans-Thies Lehmann amplifies these terms as follows:

When a clear emotional participation is added, a desire to communicate, the stage 'simple acting' is reached. (...) Only when *fiction* is added can we speak of 'complex acting', acting in the normal sense of the work. The latter applies to the 'actor' while the 'performer' moves mainly between 'non-acting' and 'simple acting'. (2006: 135)

Herein lies one of the central tensions for the hypermedium as a pedagogical model. Due to a variety of factors, some of which were illustrated in **Butterflies**, there is an anxiety about roles in the 'vast terrain 'below' classical acting' as Lehmann refers to it. (ibid) The pre-university curriculum⁵² focuses upon dramatic representation and character driven text and therefore the predominance of students arrive at university with expectations of 'complex acting' as a pinnacle of their studies and assessment. This was evident in the concerns of the DMU students during *Seven Streams* as well as in the comments from the Mesmerists.

⁵² It may be worthy of note at this stage (to contextualise the validity of my argument), that prior to my working in the university sector I taught A Level and BTEC qualifications for fifteen years and allied to my teaching career I have worked as a consultant in the 14 – 19 curriculum field for organisations including the Learning and Skills Network and Edexcel. I am currently (as of May 2013) part of Edexcel's academic advisory panel for their new A Level in Drama Studies.

In a constructivist paradigm the context for learning must hold validity for the learners and their cultural knowledge should be drawn upon wherever possible. However, the contemporary practice of hypermediality often conflicts with their expectations and their knowledge base. In 'complex acting' the self is perceived to be subsumed within the role, our self-consciousness disappearing beneath depths of character. The pervasive naturalistic traditions of Stanislavski and Lee Strasberg as well as the televisual and filmic genres that students are enculturated within reinforce this position. Whilst Brecht's conception of *Verfremdungseffekt* offers some comparison for new undergraduates to latch on to, the structuring of role in Epic theatre is far more emotional and character driven than the 'non-matrixed' performance of *Forced Entertainment*, *The Wooster Group* or the ushers in *The Good Actor*. Karen Jürs-Munby in her introduction to Lehmann's *Postdramatic Theatre* proposes that this difficulty in assimilating and interpreting such new performance modes resides in the 'deep structures that still inform the expectations of the majority of the audience when they come to the theatre or talk about it in everyday language.' (2006: 10) Audiences, she says, 'search for cohesive characters and try to piece together a coherent plot from what the performers say.' (ibid) For audience we may also, in the main, infer university students, at least at the beginning of their studies at undergraduate level. Here, for example, is a sample of a personal statement from an UCAS⁵³ application form typical of those received at DMU:

⁵³ UCAS - The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service.

I would also say my fascination with Performing Arts is quite deeply rooted in escapism. While on-stage the performers can mutually agree to a shared existence wherein the entire world fades away, and nothing exists but the audience, and the performance being crafted on-stage. A new place where I can forget who I am, and be someone else, the socially awkward or anxious can be outgoing and boisterous, or vice versa and the audience can absorb themselves in a compelling narrative, if only for a while. (2013 application to BA Performing Arts course)

Their experiences on courses such as those at DMU may challenge this type of perception but it is worth noting that *Seven Streams* was undertaken with a final year cohort and Hannah's uncertainty about playing herself on stage is from a postgraduate perspective. There is persistence in the desire to be immersed within a role and this need cannot merely be overlooked.

A second tension lies in the surveillance structure of the work. As I identified earlier, the whole installation can be seen as an example of surveillance theatre as the audience-as-actors come under close scrutiny from the start. Such self-consciousness of experience treads a very fine line between pleasure, to return to Andy Lavender's favored term of reference, and Drew Leder's conception of 'dysappearance' (1990) as discussed in the previous chapter. Leder specifically describes a form of 'dysappearance' that can be experienced in art:

Dysappearance also occurs in an aesthetic mode. I may be modeling for a painter or feel myself the object of a sexualized gaze. Such looks, depending upon the situation, might range from the enjoyable to the positively repulsive. Nonetheless they involve a certain rupture in mutuality. I become aware of myself as assumed into the *Others* project, not as co-subjectivity. (1990: 97)

Knowing that I am being observed as a participant may prompt me to undervalue or shift the value of my performance as seen in the views of the Mesmerist role and if I am an observer then the growing awareness of my own presence within the piece may inhibit my experience. The ongoing documentation of the audience and the final reveal of the media station may induce the 'wow' that Alicia referred to or a sense of self-consciousness that prompts a retreat into insularity rather than a realisatory and outward looking disposition.

In summary then, hypermediality, as I have presented it so far represents a lucrative yet precarious paradigm for education. It has the capacity to be a pleasurable experience as our own situation in the mediatized world can be revealed to us and opened up for critique. It can stimulate 'post-formal thinking' that enables the discourse of the very media that we reside within to be questioned and challenged. But as students engage with university pedagogy it also destabilises some of the modes and aspirations of performance that they are familiar with. At times it requires them to accept 'non-matrixed' roles and even when they are ostensibly

engaging in 'complex acting' this may be framed in a theatrical form that is self-referential, wherein the actors are self-conscious of their performance.

Conclusion

As with all the pedagogical paradigms that I have proposed in these case studies, this **pedagogy of realisation** shares the same quality of vulnerability. The hypermedium as a learning environment places emphasis on the surveillance of self as a socially mediated body so strives for moments where we are *without*, seeing the exterior of our lived experience as best we can. However, there is a great cultural expectation for performers to be *within* a role and students may find a directorial attention on hypermedial aspects of performance to be restricting and alienating. To appropriate a line from *The Bells*, they may not wish to be made 'the subject of this conjurer's experiments.' Whatever is proposed pedagogically must remember that tension and accept the limitations of such phenomena.

In responding to these challenges I think it is pertinent to return to Hans-Thies Lehmann and his contention that theatre and drama have been too readily conflated so that the structures and expectations of the latter have fundamentally influenced, and at times restricted, the former. He unequivocally states:

Theatre without drama does exist. What is at stake in the new theatre development are the questions in which way and with what consequences the idea of theatre as a representation of a fictive cosmos in general has been

ruptured and even relinquished, a cosmos whose closure was guaranteed through drama and its corresponding theatre aesthetic. (2006: 30-31)

The fictional expectations of drama have pervaded theatre, likewise the study of it through schools and conservatoires as well as its production and reception in the mass media forms of television and film. Contemporary postdramatic practice and the university study that is informed by such practice 'ruptures' the 'fictive cosmos' and hence reframes the debate over what is performance. When interviewing Andy Lavender prior to the Hoxton Hall event he alluded to this reconsideration of participation and role and in his answer are resonances with the fragility of cine-theatrical performance outlined in **Can Dogs Speak French?** and the reflections on collaboration and agency in **Butterflies**.

If a cast or a team of actors are involved in both understanding and generating a productive *mise en scène* they may work through a number of different strategies. Then it's possible for actors to do very modest and selfless things that in the event can nonetheless become quite seismic, the timing of a move of the head or the blink of an eye, the camera is very closely trained on you and so it is not insignificant but the actor needs to understand the audience and how these moments can be so explosive for an audience. (November 2010)

Jess underlined the significance of the collaborative process, in which the technologists are performing artists in their own right, when she stated: "In a way there's just as much ensemble in this as it involves the whole company including the technicians, which is being celebrated more and more in experimental performance." (April 2011)

To develop hypermedial practices we need to open up the potentiality of theatre as not just a dramatic space but as Chapple and Kattenbelt phrased it, 'a home to all.' To fulfill the potential of a cine-theatrical pedagogy demands an uncoupling of drama as the central knowledge base. This is not to deny drama its significance but to open up the channels for intermodal and intermedial dialogue. Theatre is in a unique position to do this. Inherent in this proposition is a need to support students from their pre-university expectation through to a reconfigured understanding of role that, for want of a better expression, may be described as selfless. As can be seen from the comments by the CSSD students, there is the potential for delight, for reflection and for a sense of agency within the installation. The pleasure is to be found in constructing the experience and the fulfillment is through immersing yourself in that experience rather than the role. In the shift from immersion to revelation lies the potency of realisation.

Conclusions: My Experience Tells Me

Richard Kostelanetz often invoked the phrase ‘My Experience Tells Me’ in his writings on theatre and it is an apt title for my own concluding chapter as I seek to meld the range of theories and the experiences that I have proposed or encountered during this study. Kostelanetz’s own concluding chapter to *The Theatre of Mixed Means* (1970), entitled *Critical Values*, will serve as a touchstone throughout the chapter and hence is a pertinent starting point for these final reflections.

The real question is whether or not the new art makes old standards irrelevant and erects new ones in their stead, for like all truly avant-garde arts, The Theatre of Mixed Means measures its distance from the old arts by the new critical problems it raises; and nothing more conclusively confirms how unprecedented the new theatre is than its defiance of existing patterns of comprehension and, it follows, current forms of criticism. (1970: 281)

This critical questioning of the implications of new hybridised forms, although forty years old, still resonates now when considering the educational impact and potential of cine-theatricality. In this chapter I revisit each of the initial hypotheses outlined in the **Methodology** and reconsider their veracity or vulnerability in light of the analysis thus far. Within these reflections I draw upon the paradigms of phenomenology, constructivism and enculturated intermediality and evaluate their potentiality for those working and learning in higher education performing arts programmes.

Reflecting on hypotheses

Intermediality is an ever-present condition of performance

- * Are practitioners' consciously using intermedial modes in their work or are processes built upon more ad hoc combinations of media?
- What media 'languages' are being drawn upon?
- What intermedial language, if any, is being used?
- ⌘ How effective or pertinent may Elleström's model of modalities and intermedia be in practice?

In the last few decades, prompted by the rise of new media it may be argued, there has been a significant shift in how media are defined, contrasted and compared. Whilst this exercise can become tautological or nebulous at times, it has destabilised the notion that media have clear delineations and, in the performing arts, ushered in a reappraisal of how a performance may be constructed and analysed. From Kostelanetz's assertion that 'the new theatre descends from several arts' (1970: 276) to Lars Elleström's affirmation that 'all 'mediality' involve 'intermediality'' (2010: 38), writers on this subject are deterritorialising media relationships. Theatre, as Lehmann (2006) has proposed, no longer needs to be seen through the singular lens of drama; hence can be recognized as a hypermedium, juxtaposing and/or fusing multiple technical and qualified media within its boundaries. In this context intermediality must be recognised as an ever-present condition of performance, however subtly or overtly this may manifest itself. Underlining this assertion is the proposal of our own selves as intermedia. Our 'biological' presence in the work

instills a myriad of media discourses at its heart, to be drawn upon as stimuli and/or phenomenised on stage. Accepting this state of being does *not*, it must be remembered, eradicate any identification or appreciation of discreet media, as several theorists including Robin Nelson (2010) and Irina Rajewsky (2010) have stressed the 'both/and' paradigm of intermediality through which we can value the unique modal 'signature' of any medium whilst also acknowledging the multitude of modalities and media that it utilises.

In my case study research I came across a plethora of media 'languages' being drawn upon from the filmic to the dramatic, from popular fiction to kitsch photography; all appropriated into a cine-theatrical environment. However, it must be noted that although I applied intermedial theory and language to my own observations and analysis, this was not to be found extensively in the practitioner environments except for Andy Lavender's brief discussion with the performers in *The Good Actor* when he referred to remediation and mediatisation. Predominantly, from my experience, the academic language of intermediality appears to remain the preserve of scholarly study. In this respect, the multitude of terms and stratifications may certainly be a barrier to the theory finding real world usage. Having described intermediality as 'media intermultimodality' (2010: 37), Elleström himself wryly notes that: 'I do not expect these terrible terms to win general praise...' (ibid)

Nevertheless, having observed intermediality's lack of theoretical percolation into professional practice, this state of affairs does not, I believe, reflect any limited applicability of such theory. Elleström's model of modalities and other recent studies (as outlined in **The stars and constellations of media**) represent a profitable set of

lenses both for practitioners and educators. I have seen for myself a productive symbiosis, for undergraduate students, between this contemporary theory and intermedial practice. Having studied Elleström's models, students on the Performing Arts degree at De Montfort University applied their new knowledge to collaborative devising projects and, with an understanding of the 'conventional' modal structure of a given medium, such as the 'fixed sequentiality' of film, were able to challenge and reconfigure performance paradigms. For example, having recognised how film is normally sequenced in time they disrupted this convention through such means as motion sensors that convert actor/audience movement into commands (pause, edit, dissolve effects and so forth) that the film responds to. Such awareness from the students facilitates what Elleström refers to as 'radical modal change' and 'transformation' (2010: 33) through which new work is forged. It is no guarantee of innovation but it provides the framework for informed experimentation. In this regard the theory is not merely a tool to quantify and analyse work but also a model for liberating practice beyond the contextually agreed parameters of media.

Symbiotically, in experiencing the impact of theory on practice (often with positive outcomes for practical grades) the students have a greater capacity to assimilate the theory itself. Whilst it does not succeed for all students, many demonstrate a greater sense of agency over their work once they become aware of the ubiquity of intermediality and are then able to apply intermedial language and theory to their own practice.

A note of caution must be interjected at this point, which to a degree is rooted in professional experience. In order for the experimentation to be productive, students

need, at some initial stage, to engage in a sound investigation of discreet media 'signatures' or what may be termed as their unique 'intermultimodalities'. Recognition of the constructions as they appear, before deconstruction and reconstruction are undertaken, is fundamental. Lars Elleström, in my interview with him, underscored the importance of progressive levels of intermedial theorising at university level. He stated:

From a pedagogical point of view I think it's perhaps best to emphasize media differences when teaching beginners, otherwise there's a risk of creating confusion (is everything the same?). However, it gets more and more important to understand the modal overlappings of media types as the studies get more advanced. For that reason, I feel no urge to completely break the barriers between disciplines. While intermediality is an indispensable perspective for more advanced studies, it may also be very valuable to have a solid base of knowledge related to one media type before one starts to ask all the tricky questions concerning media interrelations. However, postgraduate students should definitely be aware of the overlapping multimodalities of media, I think. (April 2013)

Whilst concurring with his substantive point that knowledge in this field needs to be carefully layered, I would personally advocate an exploration of multimodal knowledge in the latter stages of undergraduate practice. In my own practice I have found it profitable to use an investigation of the body as intermedium as the fundamental starting point. Utilising constructivist and phenomenological principles, it has proven to be effective to practically explore and reflect upon



Fig. 13

the students own 'body schema' (as it extends virtually out into the world) so that they may have an experiential benchmark from which to engage with intermediality conceptually. (see Fig. 13)⁵⁴

⁵⁴ The image depicts second year BA Performing Arts students from DMU exploring their experience as *intermedia*: utilising objects, image, text, space, voice and technology to phenomenalise the range of media and media discourses they assimilate into their daily lives. Following on from this session they are introduced to Elleström's model of modalities and Merleau-Ponty's conception of the 'body schema'. Module feedback from the students highlighted these sessions as particularly positive and productive in grounding their theoretical knowledge.

Cine-theatrical intermediality has a recognisable lineage throughout the 20th and 21st centuries

- * Do practitioners actually access a body of intermedial tradition in their practice?
- What intermedial traditions or known practices, if any, are being used?
- ✕ How resonant for contemporary practitioners is the lineage of intermedial practice?

Cine-theatricality is undoubtedly a significant intermodal theatrical form that has grown and mutated throughout the last century or more. From the inception of cinema, and the later development of television, the ‘respect and rivalry’ between the media have been constant themes to which educators should be mindful. Most important to be cognisant of is that the relationships between the media have been multidimensional. As identified within the study, it has often been proposed that since the beginning of electrified and mechanised media there has been an unstoppable encroachment of the ‘new’ media to the detriment of live performance. However, as I have also indicated, all media have fragile borders and theatre in particular is a resilient mutation. Film and television have undoubtedly informed and ontologically shifted theatrical construction and reception, yet theatre has readily encouraged and absorbed these incursions, from the spectacles of Méliès to the complex ‘theatricalised films’ of *imitating the dog*. Conversely, theatre has always informed screen-based media and, in intermedial performance, has the capacity to challenge and (re)frame it.

Having stated that cine-theatricality has a robust and recognisable lineage however, it is interesting to note the significance of discreet media as references in the work of the case study practitioners. The companies and particularly the directors in

question were undoubtedly conversant with and well practised in intermedial performance modes, as can be seen from previous productions as well as the notable publications of Andrew Quick and Andy Lavender. In practice though, when looking at the constructions of the performances, the stimuli that informed them and the language of the rehearsal spaces, there was limited direct evidence of intermedial and specifically cine-theatrical influences. For Lepage, *Seven Streams of the River Ota* was inspired by black and white film as well as opera and *Tales from the Bar of Lost Souls* drew heavily upon Ezra Pound and French new wave cinema. *The Good Actor* was perhaps the exception due to the influence of Andy Lavender, so was infused with a range of intermedial platforms for the work and was consciously experimenting with how we receive live and videated images as the truth or otherwise. However, it is worth remembering that the central stimulus was a 19th century melodrama.

Initially what may be inferred from this is that the lineage of intermediality lacks a degree of resonance or kudos for contemporary practice, but I would argue that it is in the very nature of intermediality to resist canonisation and replication. In its embrace of remediation and hybridity, cine-theatricality (indeed all intermediality) destabilises the 'auratic' qualities of the arts and centralises a more democratic discourse. An innate desire for intermedial practitioners, it may be argued, is to create new fusions and new fissures between media, hence the need to return to single 'signatures' as a resource. This does not discount intermedial practice as a distinct influence but perhaps indicates the impedances for utilising such practice as a direct referent for devising new material and reinterpreting/restaging pre-existing

intermedial work. It is certainly a rare occurrence for 20th or 21st century intermedial practice to be revived, either by the original company that created it or another company seeking to define it for a new generation. There are exceptions such as *Einstein on the Beach* by Robert Wilson and Philip Glass but even Wilson himself has said: “I think most of my work should never be revived.” (2013)

In educational terms, the same discourse exists and, in my experience, creates opportunities and challenges. The historical context of cine-theatrical intermediality is becoming well documented and provides a robust body of knowledge for undergraduates and postgraduates to study. It is also my contention that the lineage of intermediality needs to be more overt in performing arts programmes. However, this lineage often resists recreation⁵⁵ and students, as with professional practitioners, go in search of new material for their practical work that is often from discreet and diverse media. The challenge in these circumstances is how to facilitate this search and the subsequent experimentation in the rehearsal environment when the media that have been appropriated are infused with their own complex modalities and qualifying aspects. This places demands on both staff and students to engage with the ‘both/and’ qualities of any media. In cine-theatricality’s case, developing an understanding of film must be given significant time in the curriculum. Whilst theatre is a hypermedium and ‘home to all’, this cannot be a rationale for engaging with all the incoming media on a superficial level, which is an approach I have experienced in some undergraduate *and* professional practice. Without careful

⁵⁵ It is worth noting that one of the barriers to restaging intermedial practice (along with a significant degree of contemporary devised work) is the lack of detailed records – extensive video and written dramatic text in particular. Where video does exist this creates its own challenges if students are to resist merely creating a mimesis of the original.

consideration, the spirit of *décalage* can all too easily distort into a trivial and incoherent bricolage. Conversely, as has been alluded to by critics, theatre should not be overlooked in this hybrid, in the pursuit of a polished filmic aesthetic. It is in the juxtaposition of the 'biological' body (with all its fragilities) *and* the filmic image that greater revelations about our being in the world are exposed.

As a final thought to this section I would wish to raise the potentiality of integrating performance and technical degree programmes or perhaps integrating the content of either, as the divisions between creative protagonists (as can be seen from *imitating the dog*, Lepage and *La Caserne* and the crowded Hoxton Hall inhabited by *Lightwork*) are blurring to an ever-greater extent. As we move beyond the limitations of 'multimedia', into what Rosalind Krauss referred to as a 'post media condition', the remit of any given student in a cine-theatrical project shifts significantly. Rachel Nicholson, then a module coordinator for lighting at Rose Bruford College, highlighted the new synergies between artists during our interview in 2009:

Historically (...) the theatre designer has worked closely with the theatre director and not involved the lighting designer until they have an idea in place. What happens then when you throw a video designer into the mix? At what stage does that video designer come in to those conversations and how do the theatre designer and lighting designer accommodate the needs of the video?

These thoughts resonate with Carroll, Anderson and Cameron's observation, cited previously, that: 'The student camera and sound operators when filming are

percipients (audience) of the dramatic action and participants (creators) of the dramatic action at the same time.’ (2009: 194) In the intermedial domain this may require a constant dialogue between creative artists including technologists and/or each of the roles may be combined within one student. In either case, synergies between roles need to be developed, be that in the confluence of technical and performance degree programmes so that cohorts may be integrated⁵⁶ and/or the blending of skills and knowledge underpinning the course of any individual cohort.

I am conscious however that this creates tensions, as diversifying the curriculum potentially narrows its breadth and/or depth in any given medium. Giving drama students, for example, access to filmic skills and theory takes time away from drama specific content which may not be desirable for certain staff or students. This concern was raised in the interview with Rachel and her colleague Nick Hunt (Head of School at Rose Bruford College) as they recalled that technical degree students on lighting or sound programmes often, initially, resisted an holistic approach to productions in which they were asked to think as artists, as they had been schooled on the principle of reacting to and supporting the artistic process led by a director. However, my argument here is not to re-design all programmes or to suggest that such practice doesn’t already exist, but rather to raise awareness of how intermediality may affect courses *if* such intermedial content is placed at their centre.

⁵⁶ It must be noted that there are (and have been) examples of partially integrated degree programmes (eg University of Hull: Scarborough Campus – Theatre and Performance Programmes) and performing arts degrees that combine performance and technical forms (eg. University of Chichester: Performing Arts, [University of Salford: Media and Performance](#) and De Montfort University: Performing Arts).

The combination of the distinct modalities of film, television and theatre creates particular relationships between bodies in time and space, which are not replicated when these media are phenomenalisised independently of each other

* Do cine-theatrical combinations of media actually create effects/affects that are demonstrably distinct?

► Which modalities are employed/foregrounded most often in practice?

⌘ Which modalities have the greatest impact in creating intermedial work?

When I began this study, and ever since I started teaching in this manner, it was my belief that intermedial performance that combined film/television and live theatre produced certain effects that were not found in other performance modes. Having completed this study I am more convinced than ever that cine-theatricality offers unique experiences that can affect and inform students from both *within* and *without*.

Certain critics have expressed concern that the proliferation of digital media may in some way deaden our capacity to engage with our self, each other or the world. As cited earlier in the study, Juliana Saxton was clearly troubled by the thought that 'the art of technology' may actually be to prepare us 'for a future in which empathy will be a luxury we cannot afford as we fight each other for breath, space and life itself.' (2010: 231-232) My perspective is converse to this as I see the potential of intermediality to affirm our humanity. In *Critical Values*, Kostelanetz asserts that:

The new theatre, precisely through its de-emphasis of speech, can be devoted to eminently humanistic purposes. The literary theatre has by now become so encrusted with clichés that the words and movements of staged emotion more closely resemble archaic conventions than the immediate and intimate realities we know. (1970: 277)

He goes on to state that the 'new theatre' he had experienced, by rejecting 'such conspicuous displays of emotion', had in fact been some of the most emotional and affecting work he had ever seen. (ibid) This judgement still holds true for me today and, in my experience, for the students I have taught.

With the appropriate contextual preparation and skills development, as proposed in the previous sections, cine-theatrical work opens up compelling, although challenging, paradigms of learning. In each of the case study chapters I have sought to reveal and reflect upon how the specific modal combinations of media phenomenalise and hence facilitate an understanding of ourselves in time and space, our self as 'other' and our self as socially mediated beings. Having watched and experienced many rehearsals it is impossible to state which modality has the greatest impact in creating work but I would observe that the destabilizing of spatial and temporal modalities seems to be the most dominant rehearsal tool employed in practice. This modal experimentation creates anxieties yet also some of the greatest possibilities for actors and students. The hypermedial qualities of theatre and our own 'self effacing transitivity' can dissipate our bodies and personae across time and space and this requires, as reflected upon in all the case study pedagogies, a

reconsideration of how agency and collaboration may be configured in extra-temporal and extra-spatial terms. In all instances, the embracing of vulnerability and fragility, not as weaknesses but as fundamental modes of being, is essential. In doing so, students may be receptive to the notions of 'becoming' and 'transition' rather than fixed bodies of knowledge. Their 'zone of proximal development' thereby becomes an ongoing state of experimentation rather than a journey from the *A* of not knowing to the *B* of received knowledge. Again there are potential difficulties here, as students in higher education often feel reassured by an engagement with a delimited body of knowledge and, it may be argued, the increasing focus on the vocational significance of arts degrees has exacerbated the desire to summate learning and feel secure in a circumscribed body of study. I am sympathetic to these concerns, and compromises can be struck, but for a degree in the performing arts to be truly significant it must challenge, destabilise and illuminate the Socratic paradox of knowing that I do not know. Recalling the words of Nicolas Bourriaud, we must resist the 'opposition between the ephemeral and the durable' and engage with 'a positive idea of the transitory'. (2009: 23)

Intermedial pedagogy has an emergent presence within literature and practice but a cohesive body of knowledge in this field has not been developed to date

* Is current pedagogical theory relevant to the practice being observed and created in the case studies?

⌘ What pedagogy or methodology is applied/applicable in each case?

⌘ How might pedagogy be reconsidered in light of the observations and interviews?

In her introductory chapter to *Closer: Performance, Technologies, Phenomenology* (2007), Susan Kozel writes:

The shifting existential, political, and social paradigms we are experiencing require new modalities of reflection, which need to occur, in effect, out on a limb, reaching beyond our existing methods and approaches while maintaining relevance to our lives. (Kozel 2007: 8)

In **Intermedial pedagogy: a work in progress** and in the case studies that followed, my analysis and subsequent pedagogical proposals have been fundamentally informed by such an outlook as this. To summarise my perspective at this point I would affirm the validity of the hypothesis that there is an emergent field of intermedial pedagogy in literary and applied forms but this is not a cohesive body of knowledge. The scope and intention of this study, of course, is not to furnish intermedial pedagogy with such an all encompassing cohesion, indeed one may not be possible or desirable, but it does seek to provide greater clarity of and

contestation for one significant facet of intermedial pedagogy within higher education. As stated in the abstract, it is an argument.

As I have attempted to prove in both **Mapping Constellations** and the **Case Studies**, there is a persuasive body of evidence to support the notion of a more distinct, comprehensive and complex cine-theatrical pedagogy built upon robust synchronic and diachronic structures and informed by dynamic contemporary practice and the learners own enculturated intermedial knowledge. For my own part, I have developed this using phenomenological, constructivist and Deleuzian paradigms, yet it must be emphasised that they are no more or less than indicative of *some* new ways of exploring intermedial performance with students rather than a circumscribed boundary for what such a pedagogy must look like. My central focus is not *what* intermedial pedagogy should be but *why* it should be.

To underscore this argument it is worth revisiting Sybille Krämer's proposition that: 'intermediality is an epistemological condition of media-recognition.' (2003: 82) To understand drama or theatre or film therefore, intermediality has a fundamental role to play in undergraduate studies. This may simply be in understanding the remediative nature of the arts through to a more comprehensive exploration of new hybrid forms such as cine-theatricality. Media essentialism, in my view, is not a sustainable model for the 21st century. Christopher Balme (2008) reinforces this argument when he writes: 'As a discipline we cannot afford to rest on essentialist assumptions, which on closer inspection may turn out to be not ontological truths but merely attempts to reify a particular historical status quo.' (80 – 81)

In each of the case studies I have endeavoured to illustrate how a productive, symbiotic relationship can be developed between contemporary intermedial practice and contemporary intermedial theory. Through these lenses, it has been possible to apply current pedagogical reflection to analyse practice *and* construct new pedagogical paradigms informed by the practice itself. I have consciously sought to utilise a range of perspectives and theories as, although phenomenology on its own is a well-practised model for critiquing performance (Kozel 2007 for example), it can be productively complemented by Deleuzian theory, particularly when film is being critiqued. Many theorists in the field of intermediality adopt a collage of theories when researching in such new territory. Steve Dixon, for example, reflecting on the difficulties of analysing digital performances notes that there is ‘no overarching new ‘meta-theory’’ and this ‘has led most writers to adopt an eclectic methodology which combines and interrelates established theoretical constructs with new ideas.’ (2011: 43-44)

Intermediality and constructivist education have been allied in this study, as they are an instinctive confederation. In **The stars and constellations of media** I highlighted Peter M. Boenisch’s conception of a medium as an ‘agency’, a multilateral ‘exchange of expression’ within which mediation creates ‘authentic’ realities. (2006: 105) Intermediality may be viewed as a particularly diverse and open exchange that creates real opportunities for students to find their own agency within the ‘dissonant spaces, at the contested borders’ envisaged by Charles R. Garoian and Yvonne M. Gaudelius. (2008: 37)

Constructivist education shares the principles of discovering our own realities. Ernst von Glasersfeld reminds us that knowledge need not be 'true', rather that '... it only has to be 'viable' in the sense that it fits within the experiential constraints that limit the cognizing organism's possibilities of acting and thinking.' (1989: 162) Joe L. Kincheloe affirmed this perspective when he stated: '... no truly objective way of seeing exists. Nothing exists before consciousness shapes it into something we perceive.' (2005: 8) Intermediality creates new imaginative realms that, as Vygotsky suggests, become 'fixed as a new reality', our 'crystallized imagination'. (2004: 20)

Intermediality offers a distinct way of perceiving and experiencing ourselves anew. It facilitates a 'resensibilization of the senses' as Groot Nibbelink and Merx (2010) refer to it and unique 'intersubjective' experiences that counter, in some respects, concerns over the possible isolation of self in a digital or hypermedial environment. There are undoubtedly intimacies in intermediality just as profound as those found in more traditional inter-corporeal performance in contiguous time and space. Cine-theatricality, through its integration of filmic and televisual media, affords particularly incomparable perspectives on our being in the world. Through its capacity to reframe the body through time and space we may experience moments of 'ecstasis' and 'dysappearance' that problematise our relationship with self and the world. In these instances the body becomes simultaneously vulnerable and significant. Here again, the writings of Deleuze on cinema are particularly apposite. Timothy Murray, in *Deleuze and Performance* (2009) considers Deleuze's conception of the theatrical body as outlined in *Cinema 2: The Time Image*.

Here Deleuze suggests that cinema adds to the performative potential of theatre through its capacity 'to *give* a body'. In *giving* a body, what he calls the 'theatre-cinema relationship' brings about the body's birth and disappearance (Deleuze 1989: 189 – 203). (Murray 2009: 204)

Unquestionably for my part, the potential of a developed pedagogy of cine-theatricality is demonstrable in the pages of this study. Nonetheless it is not without its issues. As has been documented across the case studies, there are challenges to destabilising and reconfiguring performance paradigms that have been constructed over many decades or indeed centuries. The traditions of theatre and education allied to specific contemporary pressures can, at times, resist these shifts and intermediality itself, as it establishes its presence as a theoretical and pedagogical field, risks concretising into a static form with a canonical rigidity akin to what has come before. In this concluding section I would wish to re-emphasise three key challenges that pedagogy must be mindful of.

Firstly, there is the issue of balancing the dynamic of fluidity and rigidity. Throughout the study there has been an accent on transition and the constancy of becoming, learning as a continuous process of discovery. Film and theatre themselves are in ever-changing states as they are challenged and remediated by new media. This fluidity is a productive paradigm but creates uncertainties for learners as bodies of knowledge shift, skill-sets mutate and hence their sense of agency over the process and outcomes can become disrupted. This reaffirms the importance of introducing

students to theoretical and philosophical frames of reference such as those in this study so they may critically engage with their practice. Conversely, theorists and educators in this field need to guard against establishing a rigid discourse around the subject of intermediality, which often relies too heavily on complex synchronic stratification of terminology. I may indeed have been guilty of this myself at times and for this I apologise, although in mitigation there was a need to journey in this territory, if only to illuminate its complexity and distinguish some commonalities. However, there is profit to be had in valorising and cementing the place of genuinely innovative work and we should not shy away from identifying what I referred to in one interview as ‘technological classics’. Therein lies a difficult balance as the porous nature of intermediality can prompt artificial demarcation at times with echoes of media essentialism.

Secondly, the centrality of the performer is destabilised in cine-theatrical practice and whilst I have sought to present paradigms in which this is an effective phenomenon, the impact on students cannot be discounted. In each of the case studies it was noted how performers/students could become isolated from the events and uncertain over their place in the techno en scène. John, working with *imitating the dog* said: ‘Anyone could be in this. Actors can be replaced by someone else’, whilst one of the students in *Seven Streams* reflected after the performance that: ‘There was an anxiety towards the marking criteria of embodiment of character, as some performers had months with a character role and others had days.’ Ralf Remshardt in 2008 alerted us to the fact that: ‘In the intermedial discourse (...) we poorly understand how they (*media*) redefine the performer and

performance itself' (48-50) and although recent studies such as *Mapping Intermediality and Performance* (2010) have significantly entered into this debate, research is still limited into the actual affects of intermedial practice on the agency of the performer. I have sought in this study to identify justifications and strategies for reinterpreting the role of the performer but it will take time to pacify some of the concerns over what is and isn't valid 'acting' in this mode.

Finally, there should be an awareness of the complexity of knowledge in this territory and the implications of this, including who actually has ownership over the knowledge utilised in the process and any performance outcomes. The democratic discourse may be foregrounded and significance given to enculturated knowledge but the case studies did not always suggest that these aspects were central. In the work of *imitating the dog* and *Lightwork* there were clear signs that the creative stimuli for the work, the media 'signatures' selected, were often from canons of 'high art' or popular culture from previous generations that the younger actors could not always easily access in comparison to the directors. Cine-theatricality, as identified in **Can Dogs Speak French?**, can fall prey to the practices of the auteur, limiting the gatekeepers of knowledge and hence nullifying some of the potential of a constructivist paradigm. For lecturers, there must be recognition of the variety of practices and contexts at play within intermediality and note where specialist knowledge is required. This subject arose in my interview with Mary Oliver when I asked her about the specific pedagogical demands of intermediality:

MC – Is there a need for a specific intermedial pedagogy?

MO – I would say yes for delivery.

MC – If a drama lecturer started playing around with technology and then applied a generic set of criteria do you think that kind of work needs careful thinking about, careful delineation?

MO – Would you ask me to assess students undertaking a module on Shakespeare? I can assess parts of it, their character, their vocal tones, their ability to articulate and enunciate well, their ability to carry a story, their generic skill, but I would not be able to assess the delivery of that Shakespeare monologue.

MC – So you might miss something just like a Shakespeare lecturer may miss something?

MO – Yes if they'd not been a maker of intermedial work.

(Sept. 2010)

There is also the concurrent challenge for students of how to select, experiment and edit the plethora, often a superfluity, of mediated stimuli. Many educational theorists, including Kincheloe have identified that learners may be 'digital natives' accustomed to a highly mediated society but lacking the skills to critically analyse or evaluate their own experiences. Intermedial pedagogy must not assume that enculturated knowledge and experience are the same as educational agency and

therefore provide the tools, as those proposed in the constructivist models in this study, for students to find purchase with the subject matter.

What Remains ...

There has to be a place to end and I have thought long and hard over this issue. It was difficult to know what summative point to make that would not sound reductive or superficial. Luckily serendipity played its part as in the last few weeks of this academic year my colleagues and I were fortunate to experience two events that provide the perfect conclusion for this study as between them they distill what I am striving for as an intermedial educationalist.

In March 2013 our final year Performing Arts students, who are educated at length about cine-theatrical intermediality, performed their last major collaborative projects. There were many exceptional pieces and all the staff commented that they represented a real 'coming of age' for the course in terms of establishing a distinct, intermedial identity. One piece, however, stayed with me for many weeks afterwards in its beautiful and poignant synergy between live performers and hand-held filmic



Fig. 14

projections. The piece was entitled *What Remains* and was made by five students under the company name of *A Bang in the Void*. The work was presented within a simple white stage into which they placed their own bodies also dressed entirely in

white (see Fig. 14), not to deliver dialogue or to embody character, but as bodies in space from which and on to which they projected all the material from small hand-held devices. What unfolded was a truly mesmeric piece, worthy of professional

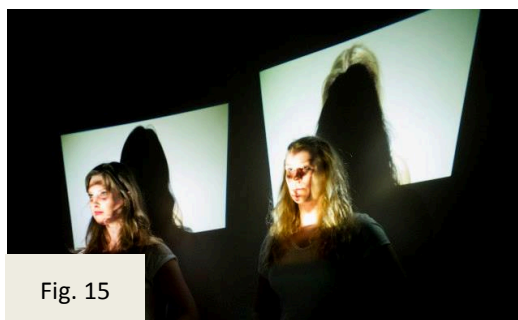


Fig. 15

practice that confidently and sensitively explored notions of identity, self and how we frame ourselves through memory. (see Figs. 15 and 16) They phrased this more poetically in their publicity material as: 'An

enthraling exploration of the lost and left behind, of the ghosts and voices that haunt old paths and of the stories our tracks keep and tell.' (2013) Within the piece the students performed with exquisite precision, attention to detail and great tenderness with each other's bodies, treating the projected

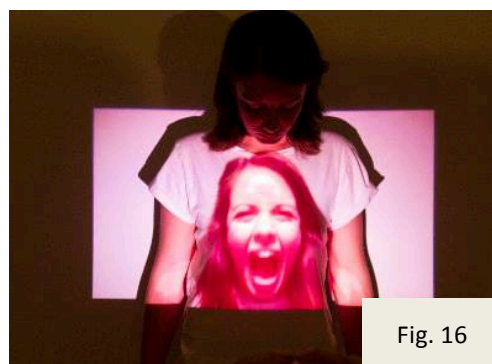


Fig. 16

image as if it were caressing the body on to which it landed. (see Fig. 17) At no point did they speak, instead utilising an original score of music and voice, or seek to



Fig. 17

engage in 'complex acting' as Michael Kirby might define it. And yet, their presence in the piece was indispensable, fragile yet decisive. Throughout the creative process the group had complete autonomy over the structure of the

work and the nature of the roles they may adopt within it. These were the choices they made.

As a follow up to the performance we, as tutors, talked to the group at length about how they had made the work and their views on their own performances. Andrew, one member of the group, considered the use of the projections and reflected that ‘... it wasn’t just a screen, it became more like a body that moved in the space, it was another performer and it became correlated with us because we were controlling that, so it was us.’ Jess added ‘It was always the body and the projection; there was never a separation. (...) But it is about the flesh and blood, the presence. The body gives it body.’ (June 2013)

A final word goes to Mark Coniglio, the artistic director of the world-renowned performance company *Troika Ranch*, who came to De Montfort University in July of this year to present the keynote address at the inaugural symposium of the Intermediality and Performance Research Group. As a closing thought he proposed his own definition of intermediality. Appropriating dialogue from Tom Robbins’ 1976 novel *Even Cowgirls get the Blues* he offered the following:

If you arrange multiple media on to the stage, arrange them so they almost touch but not quite, and then push each of them as far as they will go, pushing their wildest and most potent edges into and through each other, allowing them to intervene in each other's very nature, then you force them into the realm of intermediality. (2013)

He then paused briefly and concluded his talk by stating:

If you do this and encourage your students to do the same, you will create a constellation of contexts within which there is a grand and open horizon, a spacious vista where the viewer can create her very own personal story. If you do so, you create something much better than magic. You create an opportunity for the audience to experience a very personal, honest and thus profound emotion. (2013)

If I met Alex again, some ten years or more since we engaged in battle with the video players of Daventry, I would tell her of the journey I had taken and what potential we were attempting to harness in our small heroic acts up on the scaffolding. I would tell her that pressing *play* (if it worked) was a grand thing to do.

Whether we indulge in kitsch Elvis epics or compose fragile vignettes of memory, I am certain there is something profound to be discovered about ourselves in these combinations of media. Cine-theatricality, vulnerable as it may find us, is a unique and inspirational experience within which to learn who we are and what we may become. Best not to ignore.

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Appendix 1

Imitating the dog – March 2010 (follow up 2011?)

Research Protocol

Overview

Observation and documentation of intermedial cine-theatrical practice – rehearsal (and subsequent performance period)

Aim: to look for possible synergies and divergences between professional practice and pedagogy

Particular emphasis on hypotheses 1 and 3:

- Intermediality is an ever-present condition of performance.
- The combination of the distinct modalities of film, television and theatre creates particular relationships between bodies in time and space, which are not replicated when these media are phenomenalized independently of each other.

Procedures

- Pre visit research on company, previous work and directors
- Non participant observation at Storey Gallery and Lancaster University
- Interviews – semi structured of cast and directors – Andrew Quick / Pete Brooks
- Permissions need to be agreed – written or verbal.
- Photographic evidence when appropriate.
- Notes on Word doc or audio recording – i phone.
- No pre onsite information available

Case study questions

- * Are practitioners' consciously using intermedial modes in their work or are processes built upon more ad hoc combinations of media?
- ▶ What media 'languages' are being drawn upon?
- ▶ What intermedial language, if any, is being used?
- ⊠ How effective or pertinent may Elleström's model of modalities and

intermedia be in practice?

* Do cine-theatrical combinations of media actually create effects/affects that are demonstrably distinct?

► Which modalities are employed/foregrounded most often in practice?

⌘ Which modalities have the greatest impact in creating intermedial work?

* Are actors/students within the case studies process and performance environments able to manage their agency?

► What decisions are taken by whom and when about the creation of the work and the personas/characters within the piece?

Expected units of analysis:

- *instances of the intermedial trends (historical and contemporary)*
- *overt use of single or intermedial frames of reference*
- *language used (technical/filmic/televisual/theatrical etc)*
- *participant experience (actors/students/directors) – specifically their comprehension of their contribution to the project and what control they had over decision-making.*

Evaluation

Exploratory case with some narrative element. Approx 10 – 12,000 words.

Precise format to be configured following completion of all three cases.

Appendix 2

Sample Interview Questions and Responses

Freda Chapple (FC):

MC – For you does intermediality have to include digital practices because some define it, for example Greg Giesekam defines it as a fusion of live and digital. There's a sense it requires a digital element but I'm guessing from reading your work that's not what intermediality has to be?

FC – It can be but it doesn't have to be ... it doesn't have to have digital technology in it no its just that people became interested because digital was new but it aint new anymore

MC – A thing that fascinates me is the stratification of the term, this huge lexicon of transmediality etc. What do you think of that? Does that cloud the waters or do we need all this stratification?

FC – I think that we're coming back to your email and how I feel differently about it. You've got to put these books in context, you have to write on the shared interests but nobody can actually say what intermediality is but there was a feeling that they wanted to try to clarify the terminology, and that's fine because there's a lot of confusion. ...

Andy Lavender (AL):

MC – How would you summarise your own take on intermediality in terms of your company. You seem to foreground the body and a sensory sensual experience. How would you summarise your view?

AL – I think there has been a journey to it. For a long time I've been interested in working with video in rehearsal and production but in a live three dimensional architectonic event and I suppose initially that was an interest to engage with the aesthetics of the screen but more particularly bringing video as a resource in to theatre making, which of course it was. Anyway, to look more particularly, in my view, as to how this allows for some games, some pleasure to do with focus, what we see, simultaneities. (...)

MC – Do we need a robust intermedial pedagogy?

AL – It partly depends how you define intermedial.

MC – (laugh) yes...

AL – ... and you could argue there are plenty of people engaging in intermedial pedagogy without naming it as such. ...

Greg Gieseckam (GG)

MC – The other thing on my mind was the role of the body. I've worked with actors recently on *Seven Streams*. My feeling is that actors in an intermedial rehearsal space ... I think there's a sense that the presence of their body and the status of their physicality in performance gets lost a little. When actors or students work in this way do you think they have to give up a bit of themselves, and a bit of the kind of prominence of the actor as we usually think about it?

GG – It depends on the nature of the work and in a sense you can flip it and say that yes sometimes the body can recede, due to the nature of projection, but in some work it can actually bring back a focus to the body by contrast with the mediated image. Other times no – the performer sometimes disappears into the whole mediated scape or mediascape I suppose. ...

***Lightwork: The Good Actor: Mesmerist* (Alicia Radage and Jacqueline Coombs)**

MC – What do you think your function is that you play? How do you describe it? What's your take on it?

Alicia – Literally I play an usher and the Mesmerist. Facilitator I'd say, we're sort of facilitating that experience so we bring people in, make them feel comfortable cos it's a scary thing right cos you're gonna see some acting close up and you're gonna be in the world of the actor...

MC – Would you call this an installation? It says it on the poster. I wonder what the audience makes of the two reveals?

Jackie – It's not an installation cos you're not free to come and go as you want...

Appendix 3

Synopsis of key data results

• Gender (UK)

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Male	21	48%
2	Female	23	52%
	Total	44	100%

Date shown here only represents online results and is yet to be adjusted to include paper based responses

In which type of department do you work? Select more than one option if applicable.

#	Answer	Response	%
2	Dance	4	11%
1	Drama	27	73%
3	Music / Music technology	3	8%
5	Arts Education	5	14%
7	Technical theatre	3	8%
4	Performing Arts	10	27%
6	Other	7	19%

Do you currently have responsibility as a module or subject leader for undergraduate programmes?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	27	77%
2	No	8	23%
	Total	35	100%

To what extent is intermedial practice integrated into the content of the undergraduate programme and modules?

#	Question	Not at all	Very little	Occasionally	Regularly	Extensively	Responses	Mean
1	Select	0.00%	11.43%	28.57%	42.86%	17.14%	35	3.66

88.57% Occasionally or more

To what extent is intermedial practice assessed within the undergraduate degree programme?

#	Question	Not at all	Very little	Occasionally	Regularly	Extensively	Responses	Mean
1	Select	7.69%	26.92%	34.62%	15.38%	15.38%	26	3.04

65.36% Occasionally or more

To what extent have specific learning outcomes been written to reflect the intermedial practice within the undergraduate programme and modules?

#	Question	Not at all	Very little	Occasionally	Regularly	Extensively	Responses	Mean
1	Select	25.93%	29.63%	22.22%	14.81%	7.41%	27	2.48

44.44% Occasionally or more

To what extent have specific criteria (related to the integration of live performance and digital media) been created to assess intermedial practical work?

#	Question	Not at all	Very little	Occasionally	Regularly	Extensively	Responses	Mean
1	Select	32.00%	32.00%	28.00%	4.00%	4.00%	25	2.16

36% Occasionally or more

Consider this statement –

The teaching of intermedial practice at undergraduate level requires a distinct intermedial teaching methodology.

51.65% agree or strongly agree

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Responses	Mean
1	Select	7.41%	11.11%	29.63%	37.04%	14.81%	27	3.41

Note – this figure rises to over 60% when paper based data and non UK respondents are factored in

Questionnaire completed with Qualtrics software.